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# THE PYRENEES

WITH

# EXCURSIONS INTO SPAIN.

VOL. II.

LADY CHATTERTON'S LAST NEW WORK.

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TOWN OF CASTEL-LEON,
With the Villages of Villamos and Bebos (Spain)

# THE PYRENEES

WITH

# EXCURSIONS INTO SPAIN

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BY

LADY CHATTERTON,

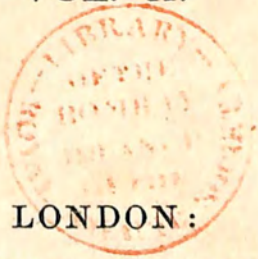
AUTHOR OF

"RAMBLES IN THE SOUTH OF IRELAND," "HOME SKETCHES,"

ETC. ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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# THE PYRENEES

ETC. ETC.

## CHAPTER I.

Excursion into Catalonia continued—Castel Leon—Spanish villages — Bosost — Delightful bathing-place at Lès — Horrors of Carlist warfare.

*Lès, July 21st.*—At a sort of chateau inn, kept by a pleasant French couple. Still on Spanish ground, but in a most delightful, and, strange to say, comfortable spot! Charmed, indeed, we were to take refuge, in this coolest of rooms, from the great heat and fatigue of our long morning's ride from Viella, and the little bustling couple who keep this excellent house have done everything to make us happy.

We were up this morning at five. Our host, the Alcalde of Viella, had promised café au lait for our breakfast, and I looked forward with much pleasure to a hot cup of

coffee, as some indemnification for the bad fare of last night. There was, however, a long delay in its appearance, and on going to the kitchen to ascertain the cause, we found that they wished to serve it up in a gilt china coffee-pot and ewer, evidently the pride of the establishment; these were, however, held in such high estimation, that, for fear of cracking them with the hot liquids, the wise "Moza" was allowing the coffee and milk to cool before she poured them in. When, at length, breakfast was served up, we found the coffee-pot occupied with the milk, and the milk-jug with the coffee—one of those laughable incidents of travel we look back upon with pleasure, and which, on a return to civilization, give a zest to its enjoyments.

In the kitchen a number of peasants were assembled, taking their breakfast before they went to work; it was a kind of soup, with potatoes and other unrecognisable things, and was, unlike our coffee, very hot. In the group were some of the pretty faces with which this valley abounds. The females wear white handkerchiefs on their heads, sometimes crossed beneath the chin, and tied under it, but the ends

Sketched by Lady Chatterton and drawn on stone by Bichebois.

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THE CONVENT OF MILTZARRAN IN THE VALLEY OF ARRAN, CATALONIA

are usually permitted to flow over the shoulders, in the true mantilla fashion. They have generally large black eyes, high foreheads, with a serious expression of countenance, a sedate air, and their figures well made and erect.

The porteurs were so well satisfied with us, that they proposed to take me free of charge to a place, I think, called Aros, whence they would return to Luchon by the mountains. To this piece of gallantry we acceded: before we started, we made some purchases from our host, and visited the church. It is an old and curious building, with the richly gilt altar, à l'Espagnole, occupying the eastern extremity.

About seven, we started from Viella, and retraced our steps as far as Aubert, stopping some minutes, en route, to inspect the old church at Mitz-aran, where Pompey is said to have built an altar; and after returning to my chaise à porteurs, I sketched the view which is here given.

We continued in the valley on the right bank of the river, enjoying, in the brilliant sunshine of this morning, the sight of the heights which the mist of yesterday evening obscured; and thus, by an excellent road, reached Castel Leon. I made a sketch of the town, with Villa,

Hermosa, and Bebos, on the opposite bank of the Garonne, which is given at the beginning of this volume. Castel Leon is a well-built town, much cleaner and more respectable-looking than Viella. Its "Plaza de la Constitution" is a square of regular houses, and, notwithstanding its "liberal" name, seems to have suffered less in the Carlist wars than most other towns in the neighbourhood; yet few of the large houses appear to be inhabited, and the place looks more than half deserted.

After leaving the town, we had a very rough descent, and then passed the junction of the two branches of the Garonne, and watched the logs as they were occasionally hurried along. The banks of the river now became closer, as it forces its way through a body of rock, where it forms a fine cascade.

We were now approaching the frontier, as was announced by the appearance of an outlying douanier, a poor, miserable-looking fellow, who seemed greatly in want of the franc we gave him. We soon after reached Aros, where our honest chairmen left us: I gave them an additional franc a-piece, and they were most grateful for what they called our kindness to

them: certainly no set of men were more deserving of it.

A new arrangement was now necessary, so as to allow me to ride W——'s horse, to which the side-saddle was transferred: he mounted the baggage-horse, and Benoit walked, leading my horse, and we contrived to make a kind of side-saddle for my maid, and thus we advanced towards Bosost: the valley here very fine. A great rocky height, covered with pines, is a striking object.

I was very sorry to part with my luxurious chair, particularly as the heat soon became so intense that even the Spanish muleteers seemed to suffer from it. The flies, too, tormented my horse to such a degree, that I could scarcely keep my seat for its sudden starts; but the scenery was so lovely, and the wild flowers and butterflies so wonderfully beautiful, that I sometimes almost forgot my aching frame and fast-sinking strength. Near Bosost, the rocks on each side form natural terraces, raised one above the other far up the mountain-side: these were covered with vines growing in luxuriant festoons from one tree to the other.

At Bosost, the most miserable-looking place

I ever saw, we found a poor Frenchman who had been detained from something being wrong about his passport. I began to tremble when ours was demanded, for to be imprisoned in such a filthy place would have been dreadful indeed. It was necessary to get a custom-house pass here, so we were all marched to the police station, which delayed us some time. A miserable police-man made a bother about our passport, the chief officer looked at it topsy-turvy, and then shook his aged head at us, with an ominous expression of doubt and suspicion, and detained us still longer. He was so ignorant, he could hardly read or write; and so obstinate that he would not be assisted. He demanded, also, two francs, which, according to M. Badin, was quite an imposition.

We at last got out of Bosost, without seeing its old church, which is worth a visit, and, with a scorching sun, continued our road, luckily resisting Benoit's inclination to stop, it being too early for us, only about half-past ten. But I was almost in despair at the extreme heat, and the prospect of another five hours' fly-tormented ride, and no place to stop at except some such miserable village as that from which we had just

escaped. The road, too, now became very rough: a narrow and bad staircase, ascending and descending among the rocky heights overhanging the river. We kept along its left bank until our arrival at Lès, where is a bridge, over which the road passes. As we crossed, a small raft with three men on it was hurried along the river with great velocity, and seemed a most perilous mode of conveyance.

Lès is a village like the rest, and at first sight held out nothing inviting. We had passed through it, and I thought we were to go on to the next, when, to my great delight, we turned up an avenue shaded with trees, and soon found ourselves in this comfortable house. I cannot express the joy we felt at arriving in this beautiful spot, and entering the cool, shady avenue which leads through terraced gardens, full of fruit and flowers. Above all, the cool room into which we were shewn, with comfortable sofas and chairs; which were once covered with brocaded velvet, but the Carlist troops, who plundered the house last year, tore the covers wantonly off, ally leaving here and there a bit: the excuse was to make themselves waistcoats. The salon, in a morning like this, is delicious, so that we

were fortunate indeed. The proprietor is M. Badin, who has built the baths beyond the town, and is now constructing an hotel for its accommodation. He gave us an excellent dinner, and I afterwards dozed away an hour most delightfully.

Our active little host presented us with a printed description of the baths. From it, I learn that the Valley of Aran is seven leagues long and five wide. It contains thirty-two towns and villages, sixty-nine churches, and about twenty-thousand inhabitants. It was well known to the Romans, who had bathing establishments at Lès and elsewhere. This valley belonged to the Counts de Comminges; and, in 1198, was ceded to Alphonso, King of Aragon, as the marriage portion of his wife, the daughter of Bernard, Count de Comminges, and since then has belonged to Spain.

In spite of fatigue and heat, W—— could not refuse our host the pleasure of shewing him the baths, which are sulphureous, and resemble those of Cauterets and St. Sauveur. They are situated beyond Lès, on the left bank of the river, about ten minutes' walk from our chateau. The baths, twenty in number, are good, and on the

upper story are four small bed-rooms, which are let at a franc a-day each, and are very convenient for those who take the waters. M. Badin gave a sad account of the sufferings which this valley underwent during the late war, from the inroads of the Carlists; who, even if only half the accounts be true, seem to have acted with a degree of ferocity not to be met with in savage life—and that, too, towards their own countrymen.

Viella was plundered and half destroyed; women and children cruelly treated, and turned naked into the streets. They attacked the house of a Carlist in the valley, which, though belonging to one of their own party, they plundered, shot the owner, and compelled the widow to bring wood to burn the body of her husband. In another place, they seized upon a priest whom they thought hostile to them, and actually nailed red-hot horse-shoes on his bare feet! They levied a heavy contribution on Viella, and insisted on receiving from one of the principal inhabitants ten thousand francs. As he could not pay it, they resolved to carry him off, but being a very old man, who would probably have died on the road, his son prevailed on them to take him in his father's place. As only part of the money

arrived at the appointed time, they gave their prisoner "dix coups de baton," promising a double dose each day until the ransom was paid; and so they went on; at last a compromise was made for six thousand francs.

Badin himself, and family, fled; but the house was plundered, the soi-disant officer of the party taking some fine shirts for himself; and we saw the chairs in the salon, from the backs and cushions of which the Carlists had cut off the damask. The loss of his fine shirts seems to have affected poor Badin far more than the other atrocities he spoke of.

We remained with our host and hostess—whom we found as reasonable in their charges as they were active in dispensing their civilities and comforts—until five; and then started, the best possible friends.

I never enjoyed four hours more than those we spent at Lès, nor ever had a more delicious nap than that into which I fell after the pretty Spanish girl had removed our dinner and given me a cup of Tisane de Tilleul, which our excellent hostess strongly recommended, and I found most refreshing.

## CHAPTER II.

Last view of the Maledetta—Return to France—Valley of Fors—St. Beat—Visit to St. Bertrand de Comminges.

The evening was now cool and delicious, and we had a delightful ride to St. Beat. M. Badin asserted that two Englishmen had come to his house, having driven up the valley from that place with a pair of horses. Our guide said it was impossible, and I quite agree with him. We soon left the fertile little plain near the "chateau;" and as the river had now to force its way through rocks, the roads partook of the same rough character, winding, like a bad staircase, above the torrent; but the scenery was splendid.

From the last little hamlet in Spain—called, I think, Pontau—the view is beautiful. A projecting red rock advances into the Garonne, and forces it to change its direction; then, on

the other side, a lofty and abrupt elevation is crowned, apparently on its very edge, by the village of Camjan. A high bridge over the stream is a fine object, and as we ascended we caught a good view of the Maledetta, and recognised the heights we were so near yesterday. This struck me as the most picturesque part of the whole valley of Aran; and here we took our last view of the Maledetta. A bend in the road would the next moment suddenly deprive us of the magnificent prospect we had hitherto enjoyed, so we lingered a few minutes, and turned round to take a last look on the Queen of the Pyrenées, and sketch the romantic scene.

The road was rough and undulating all the way, till we approached the French frontier, and the valley gradually became so narrow as to leave only room for the path and the rushing Garonne. Near the Pont du Roi, it assumed a stern and desolate character; and, as the sun's rays were completely shut out, I felt its gloom, and began to think of Carlist horrors, and to expect that every group of ferocious looking Catalans we met would detain and rob us; but no such disagreeable adventure occurred; and soon afterwards we reached the Pont du

Roi, the narrow boundary between Spain and France. Here some Spanish custom-house officers were stationed, and a little delay occurred in the examination of our passport. They appeared much surprised that we should travel for pleasure by such an unfrequented road, and eyed us, I thought, with no small degree of suspicion ; but fortunately our Bosost permit enabled us to pass. The river is here so confined by rocks as to be very narrow. Having crossed the bridge, we were again in France, and soon came to an excellent post-road.

We were now properly in the Valley of Fors : it is beautiful, of considerable width, and bounded by great wooded heights. Before us, the Pic du Gar came into view ; both it and the river Garonne derive their names from Gar, a deity of the Gauls. Near the neat little village of Fors is a pretty waterfall, and it is surmounted by the ruins of a fine old castle. We re-crossed the Garonne at Fors, and moved along on a flat, excellent road through a charming valley—I suppose that of St. Beat. The Pic du Gar, and a great height near it, tower above ; and, long after the sun had set with us, we saw its rays lighting up the summits of these giants.

The approach to St. Beat is the best part of the valley, and perfectly lovely: the town lies in the gorge which separates it from the lower valley—that of Estenos: and the passage is so narrow that the rock is close to the houses. We found our courier and the carriage in possession of the best inn (M. Fontan's), but still a bad one—had we not slept at Viella last night, I should have said *very* bad. Indeed, the intense pleasure I felt at getting safe back into France again cannot be described; and yet I was equally enchanted at setting my foot on Spanish ground when we entered Aragon.

These varieties, and the delight of seeing new countries, and equal enjoyment of returning again to another one loves and knows well, constitute the chief pleasure of travelling; and then, perhaps, the greatest of all, is the return to one's own dear home in England. Another great pleasure which accompanies travelling, though it cannot be called a part of it, is, that of making projects —the excitement of planning, of travelling in imagination, and lingering with delight on the map: there, all is sun-shine—yet never too hot. In the quiet of one's cool room, everything looks and feels delicious; and though long experience ought to tell us, that, in the fairest scenes, suf-

ferings and inconveniences must be felt; yet we forget this, and are willingly blind to all but pleasant anticipations. It is fortunate that we are not taught by past experience to expect ill.

St. Beat seems to me more worth seeing than any place I have visited on the French side of the Pyrenees, and that part of the Valley of Luchon which comes down near it, by far the most lovely; yet, strange to say, nobody seems to come here. The inn is tolerable; though our room, the best in the house, is rather cut-throat-looking. It has high, dark rafters, and two closets, receptacles for beds and dust; one of them opens on a dark staircase, and over them are two windows looking down into our bed-room from smaller ones above. But all this suspicious gloom is rather redeemed by some good carvings on the old walls, in the Louis XIV. style;—and above all, by getting back to the dear carriage, kettle, and other comforts. I was, however, actually too tired to eat or do anything, and felt so ill that I thought I was going to have a bad fever. Afraid of being laid up in such a remote place, we sent off to order post horses from Estenos for the next morning, to take us to Bagnères de Bigorre. However, I awoke, thank God! so much re-

stored by a good night's rest, that we almost regretted to leave such a very lovely neighbourhood. The delightful, and to me most unusually sound sleep I enjoyed, put me in mind of some beautiful lines Mr. H—— repeated to us, the other day, from a tragedy of Beaumont and Fletcher:—

> "Come, charming Sleep! thou easer of all woes,
> Brother to Death, sweetly thyself dispose
> On this afflicted prince; fall like a cloud,
> In gentle showers; give nothing that is loud
> Or painful to his slumbers; easy, sweet,
> And, as a purling stream, thou son of Night,
> Pass by his troubled senses; sing his pain,
> Like hollow, murmuring wind, or silver rain.
> Into this prince, gently, oh! gently glide,
> And kiss him into slumbers like a bride."

We were up at five the next morning, and went out before breakfast to see the position of St. Beat, which is very singular. The town and the Garonne, here much reduced in breadth, occupy the narrow pass, which is formed by abrupt rocky heights of considerable elevation. That in front of the hotel contains the principal marble quarry; its projections, mingled with trees and brush-wood, make it of "great value" in the view. We had not time to go up to the

quarry, which is of white marble, and decided on seeing one of red and white, not so far off.

We started under the guidance of a little girl, the daughter of the inn-keeper, crossed the bridge, and turning to the left passed the old church, which is not remarkable, and the ruin of an old tower, which once defended the entrance on this side. The narrow gateway has been removed for the convenience of a modern passage. After a walk of a few minutes from the town, we turned up a gorge to the left, and reached the quarry. It is of a fine red and white marble, but is not now worked; we saw a block of great size, partly cut.

Seeing we had time to spare,—as the horses were not ordered until eight, we sent our little guide home, and ascended by a path which continued up the valley, so as to reach the old tower of Lès (another village of the same name as our delightful Spanish retreat). This tower had a beautiful effect yesterday evening, backed by the Pic du Gar, and we thought, by climbing up to it, again to have seen that fine mountain; but though disappointed in this, we had a beautiful view over the valley we passed through yesterday. Returning to

the town, the ruin of the old castle above it appears to great advantage.

We were very glad once more to get to the comforts of our carriage and books, and on a beautiful morning, by an admirable road, drove through the charming valley which opened upon us on leaving St. Beat, whose bridge we again crossed; but now turned to the left, under a gate-way, and through a street so narrow, as barely to permit a carriage to pass. We again crossed the river, and passed the road leading to Luchon, and in little more than half an hour reached the relai at Estenos; here we arranged with the postmaster to pay six francs and a half additional for the detour by St. Bertrand de Comminges.

It is well worth a visit, and a longer one than we paid it. The position, on a considerable height, in a rich country, is very striking, and the church a great curiosity. Comminges was the Lugdunum Convenarum of the Romans, and a considerable place; many remains have been found in the neighbourhood, particularly at Valcalrère, (Vallis Caprurum) which was one of its faubourgs.

During the early period of the French history, in the struggle of Gondeband for the crown, in

the year 585, it was totally destroyed, and thus remained till the beginning of the twelfth century, when the famous St. Bertrand undertook to raise it from its ruins: he was a man of good family, and originally a warrior; but, as I related in the legend, he afterwards became Bishop of Comminges.

He lived for fifty years at the modern Lugdunum, and died there, so much in the odour of sanctity, that great miracles are attributed to him; amongst others, the destruction of a terrible serpent, which ravaged the neighbourhood. In attestation of the miracle, the skin is hung up in the church, which, however, is that of a tolerably-sized crocodile; by what miracle he changed his abode from the Nile to these mountains, is not recorded. St. Bertrand was sainted by Alexander III., and his fête is now held here with great veneration.

The town was called after him, and St. Bertrand de Comminges became a great bishopric. The attraction of the church is its beautiful carving in wood: this was done in the reign of Francis I. The organ is very rich and beautiful, and the enclosure of the choir is ornamented with heads in high relief, of very fine workmanship. These

carvings, and the painted glass, were the gift of the Bishop of Maubon, in 1551. There is in the church a beautiful monument, in perfect preservation, that of Bishop Hugo de Castellion, who finished the church, and died in 1351.

This monument is in white marble, the figure of the Bishop—larger than life, and in his robes, which are most elaborately ornamented—lies on the top. The sides are occupied with bas-reliefs of inferior execution, representing the funeral. The church was falling to ruin, and its clergyman pulled down the cloisters, to provide funds for the repair of the roof. This was unlucky, for, had he waited, the cloisters might have been preserved, as the church is now a " monument Français," and, as such, kept in repair by the government.

In the part of the cloister that remains, are some sepulchres of a very ancient date; those of some members of the chapter. It has ceased to be a bishopric, and is now, I believe, attached to Toulouse, and poor St. Bertrand is a deserted, miserable-looking place, in the midst of the apparent prosperity around it. The view from the cloisters, and from the little terrace at the entrance of the town, is very fine, and of great extent.

The Counts of Comminges were formerly of great consideration, and their territory was of vast extent, it was annexed to the crown of France in the reign of Charles VII., and the history of its annexation is curious.

In the fourteenth century, Marguerite, being an only child, became the representative of the family. She was twice married very happily; but without having had children. After the death of her second husband, she was induced to marry Matthieu de Foix, who was attracted more by the rich possessions of Marguerite, than by her merits. He behaved well for some time; but at last his real object became apparent, by his demand that she should endow him with all her property. This she refused, upon which he shut her up in prison, where she remained for nearly twenty-four years, until the year 1443, when a faithful servant contrived to inform Charles VII. of her sufferings.

The King was then at Montauban, and immediately gave orders that the unfortunate Countess should be released. She accompanied her benefactor to Poitiers, where she soon after died, and, as a mark of her gratitude and devotion, she bequeathed her property to the Crown.

After a very interesting stroll in the old town, we rejoined the carriage, which we had left at the bottom of the hill, and proceeded to Montrejean. What a difference position makes! As we descended the valley of the Garonne, it seemed tame and uninteresting, in comparison to its beauties on approaching Luchon.

## CHAPTER III.

Return to Bagnères de Bigorre—French table-d'hôte.—Comparison between the Pyrenean and German bathing-places—Departure for Argeles—Ride to the valley of Salles—St. Savin.

*Bagnères de Bigorre.—Wednesday, July* 21.—And now, after all, I am most enchanted to return to our comfortable apartments at the Hôtel de France, Bigorre—the rooms I praised and described just a fortnight ago, from whence we enjoy the pleasant-sounding bells, Moorish minaret, garden, balcony, and all. We were fortunate to get the same we occupied before: the Duke de Montpensier only left them this morning. He has gone over the mountains by Arreau to Luchon. Part of his suite are preparing for departure in the rooms above, making a most tremendous *tapage* over our heads. It began to rain to-day just after we left Montrejean, about

three o'clock, and all the distant snow mountains were veiled by clouds ; a tiresome occurrence, as we wished much to see them en masse, now that we have climbed up some of them, and become acquainted with the particular forms of many. The Duke de Montpensier will not see Luchon, nor, indeed, the road there, to advantage.

*Thursday*, 22.—And he will, I fear, have the same dark, melancholy weather there that we had; it pours rain to-day, and did so all last night. The clouds are so low that I can scarcely see even the wood at the end of this little street ; but, in spite of rain, the aspect of this place produces the same cheering effect on my spirits it did before—though we saw it first in drizzling rain, and the sun did not shine here till the morning we left it. Nothing to me is so unaccountable as the cheering or depressing effect which different places have on my spirits. In some, I seem actually in Paradise, and in others (like poor Luchon !) I feel quite miserable.

I have come back so brown after all our mountain expeditions, that I hardly know my own face in the nice Parisian looking-glasses here. We are much surprised at the high price of

everything in these Pyrenean baths; so much dearer than in Germany; and it is a comfort to know that this cannot be attributed to the English, for they are chiefly frequented by French; there was, indeed, only one English family among all the visitors at Luchon. The manner of living is much less sociable than in Germany: few tables d'hôte, no parties—nothing to bring people together; everything appears less cheerful, less primitive. Ladies, indeed, are much better dressed here, but they do not look half so happy or cheerful. Certainly, the superior beauty of the scenery compensates for much; still I delight in the "bad" life of Germany. I say nothing of low prices and facility of conveyance, which are great advantages; but its early hours, the pleasant, well-instructed, intellectual Germans, and travellers of other nations, to be met with at the tables d'hôte, the beautiful music with which the ear is gratified, all this is more soothing, as well as exhilarating, to the spirits of an invalid, than even the splendid scenery of the Pyrenees. The Germans give me the idea of being the happiest, the most rationally happy, people on earth; and nothing does one so much good as to look on happiness.

The French are, perhaps, more fascinating, more gay, and often pleasanter, for the present moment, but their conversation does not leave such agreeable impressions on the mind, and seldom is so profitable; it is more brilliant, but not half so just. I have seldom talked for an hour with a well-educated German without feeling I had gained something—at all events, acquired food for thought. The French make one laugh, and their lively wit is delightful, but they very seldom make one think. The middle classes of Germans appear much more civil than persons of the same rank in France. I doubt whether Frenchmen of the present day are so civil as those of other countries; perhaps, because they have had the reputation of being more so, and therefore take less trouble. We laughed a good deal at a scene we witnessed at the table d'hôte yesterday, where a Frenchman, after helping himself to all the best pieces of the roast fowl, turned to the lady next him, and said, with a most insinuating smile, "Madame, ne mange pas de volaille?"

*Evening.*—This has been a day of the most decided rain I ever saw. We dined at the table d'hôte, and sat near an agreeable Frenchman,

who went up the Porte de Venasque on Sunday last, the day before us. He spoke very feelingly of its dangers, and said his friend was nearly precipitated down into an abyss. He thought it was much more dangerous to walk than to remain on horseback. He said, nothing would have induced him to trust his own feet on those awful, corkscrew paths, covered as they were with snow; and when he heard that men carried me in a chair safely over them, he thought it an absolute miracle. The bad weather prevented his seeing the Lac d'Oo, or scarcely any of Luchon's lions.

*Saturday*, 24.—We did not much fancy the table d'hôte on Thursday, so we dined yesterday in our own rooms, and went to the H——s in the evening. Only themselves—but she was very pleasant. Told us it was her ancestor who, in ancient times, destroyed a serpent which infested the country near Bayonne, for which service the descendants received some rents, even as late as the Revolution. She has seen the skin of the animal; and it was kept in the church, like that of St. Bertrand.

Looked at lodgings in the morning, and saw some very good for six or eight francs a-day, in

pleasant situations. This is the only place we have yet seen where one could live at all cheap as well as comfortable. Mrs. H—— had a very good dinner brought from Hôtel du Grand Soleil for five francs, which served for three. We might live there for less than half what we pay at this hotel; but we are afraid to move, lest fine hot weather should make us long for the mountains.

The H——s passed some time at Agen on the Garonne, and intend to go there again this winter; they spoke in high terms of its climate, beauty of scenery, and pleasant society. We had a delightful drive to-day, with Mrs. H——, through the Valley of Campan. It is well and neatly cultivated, but there is nothing luxuriant or southern-looking in the vegetation, nothing strikingly beautiful in the scenery; on the contrary, the straight even fields, unadorned by hedge-rows, and the little round clumps of trees, which grow here and there on the lower heights, have a very formal air. The day was fine, the air pleasant, and the conversation of my companion charming, so that we saw the far-famed Valley of Campan to great advantage. Its fortified churches are very picturesque; they

Sketched by Lady Chatterton and drawn on stone by Bichebois

Printed by Lemercier Benard and C°

BAGNERES DE BIGORRE,
With the Pic du Midi.

have projecting towers at each corner of the spire. We went into the church at the village of Campan, whose gorgeous altar, richly gilt, proves the neighbourhood of Spain.

There are many pretty views near the town, and I have done nothing but sketch from all the windows, and in all directions, since we arrived. Indeed, I have drawn so much in the Pyrenees that I fear I shall not touch a pencil for a long time when once we leave these scenes. I think we should aim at moderation in everything. The greatest dangers which beset our path seem to me to proceed from our running into extremes. We do or pursue a thing too much and too violently; then we get frightened at our excess, and relinquish it entirely. Thus, we are immoderate even in our fears.

Called on Madame de C—— B——, who shewed us a Gascon poem, written by a barber, called Jasmin, which she says is very pretty, and compared his poetry to that of Reboul, the baker of Nismes. Some of the visitors here started last night, in the midst of thunder and rain, to a bear hunt in the Valley of Campan, where two bears had lately killed five cows.

*Monday, July 26th.*—We have just had a fire

lighted. It still continues raining, and is very cold. The H——s have scarcely passed a day this summer without a fire. In our visits of yesterday, we found fires everywhere; it was the same thing when we were here three weeks ago: yet this is usually the warmest of all the Pyrenean baths, and reckoned one of the hottest places in the south of France. We walked to the Salut, and part of the way to Elysée Cottin.

*Argeles, Tuesday evening.*—This morning looked rather promising, so we made up our minds to come here, and left Bigorre about eleven. The scenery of this place, and indeed, during the drive from Lourdes, is perfect loveliness, only equalled by parts of the Valley of Aran and the neighbourhood of St. Beat. After our arrival, about two o'clock, we walked near the town till dinner time; and since that important meal, which was extremely good (at the tolerable Hotel du Commerce, the best of the two), I mounted a donkey, and rode up to the Balandrau. There we had a delightful view of the valley, both ways, and its branches, so well known and often described, generally considered the gem of the Pyrenees. So we luxuriated over it, and sat down on the

heath, under the shade of one of those splendid chesnut trees which embellish the scenery here so much. As the donkey went well, and its little guide was intelligent, we yielded to the temptation of a most inviting path, leading higher up the mountain, and proceeded to explore the valley of Ozun. It is adorned with fine oaks and chesnuts, and with the largest walnut trees I ever saw. We crossed its green lawns and vineyards to the valley of Salles, where at one moment the park-like scenery reminded us of England; then, wild forest glades succeeded, where we expected to see a troop of Spanish banditti emerge from the tangled fern and underwood; then a peaceful, vine-clad village appeared, where pretty children played, and old women sat with their spinning-wheels before the cottage-doors, enjoying the last slanting rays of the setting sun. In short, the whole scene was full of vivid and striking, yet harmonious contrasts. I had, however, a strange sort of feeling, as if it had all appeared to me before in a dream:

> "Moreover, something is, or seems,
> That touches me with mystic gleams,
> Like glimpses of forgotten dreams.

> " Of something felt, like something here;
> Of something done, I know not where;
> Such as no language may declare."

We had, now and then, beautiful views over the sister valley of Argeles and its fine boundary of mountains. The village of Salles lies nestled between a woody height and the high mountains, and the way there and all about it is beyond description lovely. It was late when we returned, and a young moon shed its gentle silvery light over the scene.

On our arrival at Argeles, we drove to the Hotel de la Paix, just opposite to this, and which had been much more recommended; but as we did not like the rooms, we resolved to try our fortune here, and certainly made a good exchange. These little inns at the small Pyrenean towns which are not bathing-places would be very well if the floors were kept clean, but I believe they are never washed; and when the people make an attempt at cleanliness, it is a most disagreeable one, by sprinkling the boards with water. This only converts into mud the coating of dirt, and is not many degrees better than the street. The linen here, however, was perfectly clean, the beds good, and the fare excellent. We

have tried to persuade the girl in future to give up the sprinkling system, and wash the floors; if this were done, or if they were dry rubbed, the little Hotel du Commerce would be very charming.

*Wednesday, 28th.*—We had a fine morning for our excursion to St. Savin. We started at seven, and at first kept the high road to Pierrefitte. After descending the hill of Argeles, the road is perfectly flat, and perfection as to make—the best specimen possible of Macadamization. The rapid mountain-streams give great facility for mills, and sawing timber seems an active trade here. A new bridge, which will be a great improvement, is now being built across the Gave d'Azun, whose valley is said to be very beautiful.

After passing through a small village, we turned to the right, near a great stone, according to the direction we had received, and then ascended towards St. Savin. The greater part of the way, the road passes through ground planted with fine trees, generally chesnuts. So much is it shaded—a great luxury this hot morning—that the view of the valley is almost shut out. After a walk of about three-quarters of an hour, we

reached the little village, which is very small, with arcades of the rudest kind to the houses.

The church is a very singular one, of great antiquity; built by Charlemagne, on the ruins, as is supposed, of a Roman fort. It once belonged to a convent, and is now sadly out of repair, and was exposed to all manner of injury and profanation during the Revolution. The clergyman, whom we fortunately met, gave a melancholy account of his want of funds to support the church. Sixty francs a-year is all that is appropriated for that purpose. He says it has been recognised by the government as one of the "monuments historiques de la France;" but only five hundred francs were sent for its repair, when eleven thousand were required. Charlemagne built the church when here, prosecuting his wars against the Moors. St. Savin was a Spaniard of great celebrity; and some old pictures, not badly executed, in the style of Cimabue, represent the miracles of the saint. These paintings have inscriptions in the Gaulic dialect, and are in very good preservation. The altar, rich in marble, shews that the monks paid great attention to their church. From the garden of the old monastery, the view of the valley is

very beautiful. This was a piece of information we received after we had quitted the place, and we must recollect it for our next visit.

We made a rapid descent, and got home in about half an hour; though we stopped on the road to answer a poor widow's inquiries as to the Duke of Montpensier, for whom she had a petition. She shewed us the petition: it was signed by the mayor, stating that the woman was a widow, and her case one of great distress; alleging, at the same time, the impossibility of the commune to do anything for her, as the crops, during the last season, were destroyed by hail. This simple allusion to an event that must have visited numbers with suffering and distress was very touching. These visitations are but too common in the Pyrenees.

We returned home, before nine, to an excellent breakfast, and at half-past eleven started for Pierrefitte, on our way to Luz. After leaving Argeles, the road was perfectly flat all the way, and of the best description; fields protected on the road side by large slates. Passed close under the height, on which stands St. Savin and the prominent church beyond it, from whence the view of this charming valley must be very fine. We

afterwards ascertained this to be the case on our way from Cauterets to the Valley of Azun. It is a good plan to ride or walk by St. Savin, between Pierrefitte and Argeles: this fine view may then be seen.

We passed on our right, in a delightful position on the height above, in the midst of trees and vegetation, a campagne, which, seen from the road, is one of the most striking I have met with. But, alas, this is one of the objects in life which cannot bear a close inspection! We saw it on the 17th, on our way to Azun, and found that it is almost a ruin; a nouveau riche, a peasant has purchased and neglects it. According to the rate we paid from Argeles (16 kilometres), there should remain only three to Pierrefitte: we paid for eight—a little instance of posting trickery, which is to be found even in the Pyrenees. We saw the new line of road to Cauterets, winding up the deep and narrow gorge; at the distance we were, it appeared quite impracticable.

We changed horses at Pierrefitte, and there met two or three wagon-loads of soldier-invalids, returning from Barèges, where is a military hospital.

On leaving Pierrefitte, we crossed the Gave de Marcadan, the rapid torrent which flows through the Valley of Cauterets; and soon after crossed the Gave de Pau, as it rushes from the neighbouring Valley of Luz; and still, by a perfectly good and flat road, we entered the defile which leads to that place. We continued along the right bank of the stream, to which the rocks descend so close as to leave barely space between them and it for the narrow road. It is a striking pass, and would be gloomy, if not seen, as we saw it, under the influence of a brilliant sunshine.

We again crossed the river, and then gradually crept upwards to descend to it again; but the road not sufficiently steep to require the drag. The bridges are of single arches, and well constructed of the coarse marble with which the district abounds.

After passing the third bridge, the "forte montée" began. We walked, and gradually, by an excellent road, reached a great height. The river has forced for itself a passage amidst rocks covered with wood, and occasionally it appeared fretting in its narrow bed, at some hundreds of feet below us. Yet it is on the side of this almost perpendicular ravine that they are now

constructing the new road,—a most daring undertaking in appearance, though I suppose, to the eye of an engineer, not so formidable, as there are no tunnels to make. It will render the Luz road very easy. If my guide be good authority, it is in contemplation to make a carriage road into Spain by Gavarnie.

We walked a considerable distance, nearly to the fourth bridge, as the sharp turns in the road alarmed me. After passing the fourth bridge, we entered the Valley of Luz, and had a charming drive in a comparative flat. At the fifth and last bridge over the Gave de Pau, we left the river, and now advanced through the wider, and consequently more magnificent, valley to Luz. Before reaching the town, we crossed the Gave de Bastan, that most angry of Pyrenean streams, which, when swollen, spreads ruin and desolation all around.

## CHAPTER IV.

Luz—Erroneous impressions of the climate usually given—Ascent of the Pic de Bergons—French luxuries and comforts—St. Sauveur.

*Luz, three o'clock.*—Here we are, established unexpectedly in the most comfortable and pretty lodgings possible. A number of windows looking in all directions, and every one commanding a different and a lovely view. From one, the Pic de Bergons is seen rearing its fantastic head high into the blue sky, above fields, and vineyards, and roofs of cottages. From another, the old ruined castle of St. Marie, which belonged to Edward the Black Prince, surmounts the high pass conducting to Barèges. This part of the picture is gloomy and stern; but just under it, and far below, is the little inn of Luz, where carriages are always coming or going,

and gay riding parties mounting or dismounting, where diligences arrive and disgorge their motley contents—a bit of cheerful, ever-moving life; where happy faces are sure to be seen, either expecting pleasure in the excursion they are going to make, or satisfied with the mountain expeditions they have just finished; and all this under the remains of past greatness—the time-stained towers of St. Marie—which have been the scene of many a direful conflict, and witnessed the feats of our brave Prince Edward.* Another window has a balcony where a profusion of carnations are growing; it looks up the little street, and on the fine mountains of the chain towards Gavarnie, the Brêche de Roland and its eternal snows. Then W——'s dressing-room has a covered balcony which commands the most beautiful view of all, for it looks both up and down the Valley of Luz, with all its crowded forms of beauty and innumerable pictures of grand and sublime scenery. Opposite

*Fourcade says, in his "Album Pyrénéen," that, in 1404, it was taken from the English by Jean de Bourbon, assisted by the inhabitants of Bigorre and Baréges, under D'Auger Conflitte, whose descendants still exist. This castle and Lourdes were the last possessions held by the English in the Pyrenees.

this balcony is another old castle, more ruined than that of St. Marie. It overlooks St. Sauveur and its green walks, and commands the Pass of Gavarnie, the nearest to Spain; and thus it has suffered probably more than its neighbours, for only one arch remains, and a low wall which encircles the conical height where it stands.

We are, indeed, lucky to enjoy all these varied prospects from rooms that are clean and well furnished. A whole floor to ourselves, and for eight francs a-day.

I have done nothing this last hour but run from room to room and window to window, in an ecstasy of delight, fancying each of the views more beautiful than the other, and luxuriating in their delicious coolness and shaded balconies.

*Thursday*, 29.—I have just been reading some travels in the Pyrenees, and am surprised at the disapprobation expressed of the inn at Argeles, and of the food at most Pyrenean inns. We always think the fare excellent, better than what is usually met with at English inns; and as to the complaint of not finding tea or soap, how very easy it is to take a little of each with one. I always carry my own supply of soap, and even in England do not like to use what is

found at inns. Then, what is said about the scanty supply of water and smallness of the basins is certainly unjust. The basins are indeed small, but we have never yet seen a hotel in the Pyrenees (however remote, small, or bad it may be) where a large pan or foot-tub was not to be found. At Argeles, the very place so much complained of, I had, besides three basins, a pan much larger than most English foot-baths; and W—— a sort of hip-bath, full of water, and large enough for a small child to swim in. We found there no dearth of water, hot or cold; and, indeed, comforts of all kinds are much easier to be found than people who have not been long abroad imagine; and it is a pity to frighten invalids who think of travelling, by conjuring up these kind of difficulties, which only arise from helplessness, and a want of determination to get all the comforts one can. We had, too, at Argeles, a dinner which would do credit to the best hotel. On the other hand, I think many tourists mislead the untravelled English by their encomiums on French or foreign climates. I do not think the air of France, north or south, or indeed that of Germany, or even Italy, a bit more exhilarating to the

spirits than the sweet breezes of our own dear England.

My malady, that which I have suffered from since earliest youth, is low spirits; and I have always hoped that some of the southern climes, about which people write in such high terms, might be of use, but I never found the least benefit from them. On the contrary, the only tour that was of any use to me was one we made in Ireland—that poor slandered country of reputed rain, clouds, and discomfort.

I do not mean to say that people misrepresent the happy state of their feelings when travelling on the Continent, but the fact is, they are wrong in attributing the exhilaration they feel to the climate, whereas it probably proceeds from the exciting effect of new scenes, a different country, interesting places, and, perhaps more than any of these, from the fact of their getting away from the cares and torments of housekeeping, and sundry other annoyances which home, sweet home, sometimes entails; above all, to those who write, meaning to publish, there is another and most delicious excitement—the hope of amusing and interesting others.

I suffered last night and this morning from the

most violent headache I almost ever had, the effect of yesterday's hot and nervous walk by the side of precipices; it was too much for me, suffering, as I still am, from the fatiguing days of Venasque and Viella. My idea is, that southern climates are, in general, extremely prejudicial to English constitutions, particularly in summer. Our climate is reckoned changeable, but it is nothing to the vicissitudes of intense heat and cold often experienced here in the same day. Besides this, English people seldom take the same precautions which the natives do; they expose themselves much more to the midday sun, instead of remaining at home and going to sleep.

*Friday*, 30th—Still ill and quite disabled, unable to accompany W—— up the Pic de Bergons. This is the account he gave me of the expedition:—

"A dry morning, but the clouds looked very unpropitious for an expedition to the Pic du Bergons, yet, at six, my guide came, who gave promise of a fine day. This dissipated my misgivings, and at twenty-five minutes after seven we started—I mounted on a grey *jument*, which proved excellent. Immediately on leaving

the town, we commenced a rough and steep ascent; it improved as we advanced, to change again for what was rougher and more steep. Our road lay by the Lastive, the sheep pasturage immediately behind the town, between it and the Pic de Bergon.

"We were now enveloped in thick fog, and our prospects appeared anything but cheering; even the guide seemed to despond. We met a poor farmer who had his hay to save, and who, when he saw us, exclaimed, 'Mauvais tèms pour le moisson, et pas bon pour vous autres.' However, a shepherd boy, whom we afterwards met, cheered us up by saying, he had come down from the top, and 'qu'il y avait le soleil,' and fortunately we found he was correct. As we ascended, which we did very rapidly, the fog seemed to lose its chilly feel; and at last, to my inexpressible delight, it rolled away, and a brilliant blue sky and the mountain-tops became distinctly visible.

"We now arrived at a piece of turf, almost flat compared to what we had climbed, and to that we had still to surmount. Having passed it, we worked up a steep bit, to reach the ridge of the height; this we accomplished in one hour and fifty-eight

minutes, from the time of our departure. Here we left the horses with a shepherd, and in eight minutes, by an ascent by no means steep, and over turf, we reached the top: thus doing in two hours and six minutes what it was said would take three hours. I do not think I ever enjoyed anything more. As we walked towards the top, it seemed as if a new and brilliant creation had just opened upon us—as if we had left the cold, damp world below, shut out by the snow-white clouds which lay beneath. The effect was curious and beautiful; the mist, strongly lighted by a bright sunshine, looked like a sea of frosted silver, and the numerous heights with which I was surrounded, like pointed islands abruptly rising from it.

"The view from the top was to me highly interesting, as I saw from it, most distinctly, the entire chain of the Mont Perdu, the Marboré, Brèche de Roland, Cascade, Amphitheatre, &c. These great heights occasionally looked so near, that I sometimes thought I might see a man, if he happened to be on them. The guide was delighted and astonished at my opera-glass—my "Jumelles centrées," from Chevalier's, which I found of great use. The clouds hovered over the

valley of Argeles, so as to conceal it from my view; however, I sa was far as Pierrefitte; thus the entire gorge was visible, with its ten villages—on the right, Esquiso, Sers, Visos, Saligos, Chezé; and on the left Biscos, Greuzé, Sasos, Sassie, and St. Sauveur. The day was delightful—not a breath of wind, neither too hot nor too cold; though the height is considerable. On a bed of snow in a hollow, a long way below, a flock of sheep were luxuriating. I attempted to take an outline of the amphitheatre of heights around me, and to give them, as well as I could, in writing, their names as pronounced by my guide; rather an indistinct proceeding.

"I remained one hour and eight minutes on the top, and left it with regret. In about a quarter of an hour after joining the horses, we re-entered the mist, and for half an hour all was obscurity; yet not without its effect, for it gave a greater apparent steepness to the path, and we seemed to be plunging into a great abyss. I walked a considerable way, though more from choice than necessity—my little mare would have carried me quite safely. When we regained the Lastive, the fog was left behind, and we had a beautiful view of the valley of Luz. I got down in an

hour and twenty minutes, to G——'s great surprise and delight: she did not expect me for a couple of hours more."

These narrow Pyrenean valleys have, I think, a peculiarly depressing effect on the spirits; other travellers whom we have met feel it as much as I do, though great admirers of fine scenery. I admire this place immensely, but still the very exquisiteness of its grandeur, loveliness, and sublimity seems to depress me. As for Luchon, I felt, at the end of our twelve days' rainy séjour there, as if in a vast grave.

Then, these valleys being, for carriage-travelling, all culs de sac, the conviction that one must return the way one came—that there is no other outlet except over nearly inaccessible mountains—gives an uncomfortable and half-imprisoned feel; particularly to those who, like me, never ride for the sake of riding, and only mount a horse because it is the sole means of seeing fine scenery. I am too timid to ride in the green lanes of England, where there is no danger; yet here I encounter all these stair-case roads, and on the brinks of precipices. Perhaps these efforts beneath the hot sun, and unusual fatigue, have tended to unhinge my nerves and spirits.

Yet we are in great luxury here. The air of this place seems to me peculiarly fresh and pleasant. It is situated on a little height in its own deep valley, and some of our windows look down upon the far-off entrance to it, which is the only speck of low horizon; and I find my eyes always turn with delight to that single small bit of low sky, even after contemplating the exquisite beauties which surround me. Our position is most amusing too, for the road between St. Sauveur and Baréges, which passes close under our windows, seems the great promenade of all the gay bathers and riders.

The toilette at the Pyrenean baths is very récherchée. A party has now passed by on donkeys, the ladies looking as if they had just issued from the hands of Palmyre and Herbault, and the gentlemen equally fine. Certainly the French ladies have a particular turn for dress and for keeping themselves in order. They manage so well that not a crease is discernible in their pretty muslin or Baréges attire. This does not give the idea of being comfortable, but it is very pretty, for the dresses are in such extreme good taste.

It is amusing to see the ladies mount their

donkeys — the care with which the tournure (bustle) is placed over the saddle; the fantastic riding costume of some—red Spanish sashes, &c.

My idea as to the comfort and luxury of French people is much altered by seeing the excellent accommodation in these bathing-place lodging-houses. Very few English come here, therefore it is solely for the French that they are built, and kept scrupulously clean, and adorned with luxuries and comforts, I think superior to those to be met with in our English *summer* watering-places, with the exception of Brighton and Leamington. Then the luxury of conveyances gives the idea of great wealth: the chaises à porteurs seem to be in constant requisition. At Luchon, a chaise à porteurs costs forty francs a-day, and here thirty. This for the conveyance of one person is a large sum, and sometimes three or four chairs are seen in the same party; so that a day's expedition must be very expensive. The departure of such an expedition, accompanied by guides, horsemen, &c., is an animated sight, and made still more striking by the wild chorus which the carriers sing with excellent effect.

The profusion of marble used in furnishing

the houses is very charming; all our windows have polished marble slabs, and the chimney-pieces, washing-tables, and tops of drawers, are of the beautiful red or purple marble found in these mountains. The door and window-frames are also of marble, which, though not polished, look rich and handsome. Then the bedsteads, doors, and those comfortable large armoires, with which this house is so plentifully furnished, are of different kinds of ornamental wood—and all very pretty.

This is a fine day, but masses of cloud are hovering about the mountains, which I am afraid will sadly obstruct W——'s view. The sun is so intensely hot, that I am very glad to be sheltered from its rays, and that our south windows have solid shutters; yet the breeze which comes through the north casement, at which I am sitting, feels as if it had passed over ice, and is so cold that I am obliged, every now and then, to shut the window. This is the sort of broiling on one side and freezing on the other, which I fancy must be trying to an English constitution.

There is, in the centre of this little town, a very curious old fortified church, a sort of mixture of church and castle, formerly belonging

to the Templars. The door which served as a separate entrance for the poor Cagots was pointed out to us.

We have just been to see a very nice lodging,* a house called Grandet's, recommended to us, but which we forgot. On the whole, we are as well off here, and our windows command a greater variety of prospects; but Grandet's stands in a beautiful garden, which slopes down to the high-road, and has a more uninterrupted view of the valley towards Argeles.

After dinner, I mounted a donkey, and we went up to the ruins of l'Hermitage, on the rocky height overlooking St. Sauveur. They command fine views all over the valley, and up the narrow defile leading to Gavarnie. We lingered there some time to enjoy the view, and watch the slanting sun-beams retire from one mountain-top to the other, with a rosy smile that seemed to wish them each good night. The Pic de Bergon, W——'s friend of the morning, was the last to receive the sun's part-

* The first-floor, ten francs, consists of six bed and two sitting rooms, and a broad terrace over the garden. Besides this, the proprietor has a carriage, which, for two francs, will take one to St. Sauveur every day.

ing kiss, and its green summit glowed with a purple hue that made one quite happy to look on, and seemed to promise a lovely day for to-morrow. I hope never to forget the peculiar beauty of that sunset, or the graceful forms of the rose-coloured clouds that hovered here and there, as if they loved those beautiful mountains:—

> "Too transient, were they not renewed
> From age to age, and did not, while we gaze
> In silent rapture, credulous desire
> Nourish the hope, that memory lacks not power
> To keep the treasure unimpair'd. Vain thought!
> Yet why repine, created as we are,
> For joy and rest, albeit to find them only
> Lodged in the bosom of eternal things?"

We then descended, by a narrow, steep path, to the road that leads to Gavarnie, and then down another, to the torrent which rushes close below St. Sauveur. This we crossed by a little wooden foot-bridge, and wound up, through a garden, to the town. It consists of one narrow street of well-built houses, containing many comfortable apartments. Saw one of six rooms on the wrong side of the street, for which the woman asked fifteen francs a-day, but said she

would take twelve from us. Came home by the regular carriage-road, much pleased with our little excursion of about two hours and a half, and more than ever satisfied with our quarters here.

## CHAPTER V.

Castle of Sainte Marie—Beautiful walks—Misery of whip-cracking—Ride to Cascade near St. Sauveur—Gavarnie—Vallée de Gédre—Pont de Scias.

*Saturday.*—I felt stronger last night, and hoped much to be able to accompany W—— to Gavarnie this morning. The horses were ordered at five, and one with a side-saddle for me, to our guide's great joy, who is most anxious I should see the wonders here; but a sleepless night, and the great anxiety I felt to be able to go, rendered me quite unfit; so I was obliged to be content with dear W——'s enjoyment of this beautiful day. After getting up, to see him start and admire the lovely view from our windows, I went to bed again, refreshed by the delicious morning air. I could not sleep, however, so I read the "Merry Wives of Windsor," and

have ordered a donkey, in the hope of being able to get to the old Castle of Sainte Marie.

Travellers in good health are generally so occupied with distant excursions, that they neglect the little near beauties which often abound; for instance, our last night's little invalid excursion of two hours was most delightful, and W—— said he had seen nothing so lovely in the wider range of his mountain-top expeditions.

The little common walks, which are within the compass of an invalid's powers, are often the most beautiful. I regret Gavarnie the less, because every one goes there, and prefer keeping my little strength for less-frequented excursions, such as the one to Viella, or rather the return from Viella, by the Valley of Aran, to St. Beat. I have never met with any one who had done it; yet the most beautiful part of it might be accomplished by any invalid who can ride. It has, too, the additional attraction of a new country—quite a different race of people, &c. —and is not fatiguing, provided it is not done in mid-day sun-shine, which, in that hot valley, is enough to kill an English person.

One of the greatest miseries of the Pyrenees is the eternal whip-cracking, which echoes with

a peculiar loud and sharp report in these mountain valleys. I wonder how the invalids can bear it; their nerves must be much stronger than those of the English. I am sure in no place in England intended for invalids would that most irritating sound be tolerated. I feel it like a pistol-shot close to my ears.

Started, after breakfast, on my donkey, for Sainte Marie. When we got to the foot of the height on which it stands, I found the path was not practicable for the donkey, so I had a broiling ascent on foot; but was well repaid by the view from the castle over the three valleys it overlooks. The ruins occupy the entire summit of the high mound, and consist of one round and one square tower, nearly perfect, united by a high wall. The old court of the castle is now a garden, and belongs to the proprietor of our house. He gave me the key, which admitted us to its pretty shady walks, and I sat down under some trelliced vines, to enjoy the view, and think of our own dear Prince Edward. My little donkey-girl gave me a most touching account of the laborious life she leads, often walking to Gavarnie and back, besides various courses in the day. The most tantalizing thing about these

Pyrenees, is, that the baths, where alone any comfortable accommodation can be found, are not situated in the prettiest spots. St. Beat, at the beginning of the valley of Luchon, and Argeles, at two hours' distance from here, are the most attractive places I ever saw. One would like to spend months at both of them, so endless does the variety of walks, rides, and mountain and valley excursions appear. But, then, from their being unfrequented, except by passing travellers, they have no guides, no regular horses, &c. I think, in a few years, if the Pyrenees become frequented by the English, all this will be remedied.

W—— has returned home, delighted with the expedition to Gavarnie; his account of which I will insert:—

"I was up at half-past four. A charming morning. At seven minutes after six, M. Ballin (who unites the occupations of guide et chaudronnier, according to the seasons) and myself duly mounted, started for Gavarnie. Before reaching the bridge to St. Sauveur, we turned to the left, and entered a magnificent gorge, in the style of that of Pierrefitte, but finer, as the outline is grander.

"We advanced for about three-quarters of an

hour, by an excellent road; having taken due notice of 'les objêts remarquables' in this part of the excursion—viz., the echo sent back by a perpendicular rock over the river; the Pas d'Echelles, below the present road, which was once the passage, and must have been an awkward business; and the four small mills on the side of the cascade of Scias.

"We then descended a steepish bit *à l'esculier*, to the Pont de Scias: the present bridge is built over the old one, and at some distance above it; both stand over a cataract of the river—the effect is fine; but that of a fall higher up the river is still finer, owing more to the body of water than the height.

"We now ascended by a rougher defile, more wild and open, and with a more scanty supply of trees; box-wood, which occurs in great abundance throughout the mountains, seems here to exclude the growth of much timber. We crossed the river again, and then entered the valley in which lies the hamlet of Bagnéres. We passed its torrent by a bridge, and ascended considerably. Met a woman having a dead izard for sale; she wanted twenty francs for it. She sold it for sixteen francs, as she told us, when

we met on our return. We turned to the left, above some houses, and then entered the valley of Gefre. It is rich, and, in addition to its own heights, here part of the chain of the Amphitheatre comes into view. The Pic de la Fausse Brêche is remarkable for its striped appearance, rock and snow seem to alternate.

"In an hour and twenty-two minutes, we reached the inn at Gedre, and I quietly submitted to what many think a hoax, the inspection of its grotto. To be sure, when on the way to the terrors of the 'Grand Chaos,' and the sublimity of the Amphitheatre, it may seem ridiculous; but in itself it is a pretty thing. Beneath the grotto, a tolerable-sized torrent falls into a deep basin, in which it foams and roars with considerable effect before it can get out. I paid my ten sous, and re- mounted

"As we advanced, the Pic de Stiverbol, and further on, the Buet, are snow-sprinkled and fine heights on the right. After the supercilious feeling with which I scarcely noticed these heights from the Bergons yesterday, a ride like this is of great use. It was to me a good lesson of humility, shewing how little man is in reality,

that it would take several hours to reach the summit of that which I yesterday so much despised.

"The approaches to Gedre are a good deal in the staircase fashion—the rest of the road very good. The 'Grand Chaos' is, indeed, an awe-inspiring sight. Upset a large basin of lump sugar on an inclined plane, and put a mite to find his way through it, and you may form some idea of man traversing these stupendous blocks, piled one above the other in majestic confusion. I passed through it in silence, and felt as if to speak in such a scene would be a profanation. Its giant parent, the mountain from which it was separated, towers to an immense height above; some little projection detached from its mass, has formed this striking spectacle. Why is it that the 'Chaos' should produce a greater feeling of wonder and awe than the enormous body, of which it once formed so inconsiderable a part? Does this arise from the littleness of man's conception? He compares the one with himself, and all his feelings are awakened, because he can grasp the thought; he sinks before the other, because he has no standard by which he can elevate his mind to its contemplation.

"Roland was just the character for scenes like this. The marks of his horse's hoofs are shewn in the rock, which were imprinted as he jumped from the top of Bilban. His next spring was to the top of Marboré, where he made his famous brêche, by a single cut of his famous sword, Durindana.

"As we advanced, the noble summits of the Marboré were distinctly before us in great splendour. Habitations are scattered over the valleys of Gavarnie, and some are placed at a considerable height up its western boundary. We had now passed the Mont Sinistre, so well deserving the name, and which, on the opposite side of the river, forms the ravine in which lies the 'Grand Chaos.' Its base is covered also with the ruins of its former projections. As we advanced up the valley, Mont Coumelie is on the left. By it, there is a passage into the Valley of Heas, which the Dukes of Orleans and Nemours visited. They were very active, and saw everything; and the Duke de Montpensier seems to be following their example. The Pain de Sucre, a projection of Pic de Pimené, is a fine object. An excursion to the summit of the Pimené may be made from Gavarnie: it must command a noble

view. The Pas de la Corniche connects the two parts of the Valley of Gavarnie, and having passed it, we kept gradually ascending, until a staircase led to the Pont de Lavequi, close to the inn. There is here a cataract of considerable effect. In forty minutes from Gedre, we reached Gavarnie; making the distance, calculated as three hours, in two hours two minutes.

"I only waited at Gavarnie time enough to order my breakfast, from its tall, gaunt, and imposing-looking old landlady. Two parties were already arrived. Lord S—— and my guide had put me up to her character, so I made a bargain for two francs—she asking three, and I offering thirty sous. The amphitheatre appeared quite close, and yet it took an hour to reach the plateau below it, fifty minutes to the place where we left the horses, and ten minutes on foot. After leaving the inn we kept along the side of the river by a tolerable path, then crossed a rather nervous bridge, and ascended a rough ridge, to descend it again, in order to reach a small plain, covered with grass; this, I think, is said to have been a lake. During all this time the sun was very hot, and gave perfect distinctness to every part of the mighty pile before us. Having passed the turf, we had an-

other rocky ascent, when we left our horses, and continued afterwards on foot.

" Still ascending, we reached a torrent, which I crossed; then a piece of snow, which usually disappears in August; and, after a short ascent at the other side of the snow, found myself in the centre of this mighty cirque. It is a splendid thing; and though those who look for the details spoken of by Mrs. E——; viz., ' the towers of Marboré, crowned with eternal snows, and all formed of the most beautiful marble, fluted like the columns of a Grecian temple,' will, I think, be disappointed, yet they cannot be so by the sublime effect of the whole. The cascade, like most cascades, seen at a distance, is not effective; in volume of water, I should say it is much inferior to that of the Lac d'Oo; but the cirque or amphitheatre is of great magnificence. One may fancy it formed for a conclave of giants. A broad belt of snow, which never melts, fills up the bottom, and receives the eleven falls of different dimensions; which, united, form the Gave. On the side of the great cascade, the rock rises perpendicularly to a great height, terminated by a jagged outline. The cirque, properly so called, where my giants used to assemble, consists of three

prodigious rows of seats: behind them, a more level space, where is a glacier and deep eternal snow; beyond it, two other rows of seats; then a mighty wall, above it, a canopy of snow, and the great heights of Marboré crown the whole. I suppose the perpendicular wall gave Mrs. E—— the impression she describes. There is in it a variety of colour, which arises probably more from the stains of snow as it melts above, than from the colour of the marble itself; and these stains may have given rise to the idea of columnar formation,—at least, it approached nearer to it than anything else I saw.

"I ascended the side a little, opposite to the fall, and attempted a sketch, but I was too near to produce any effect. Spanish shepherds rent these scanty pastures in the autumn, paying about five or six sous a-head for their sheep. Barren as they appear, they are invaluable to them, when the pasturage on the southern side of the mountains is burnt up. I remained nearly an hour, which soon passes over; so absorbed is the mind in such a scene. And yet—what habit will do!—my guide sat near me, fast asleep! As we descended, he pointed out the rock which affords a poor protection to the Spanish shepherds during

their visit here. Some fir branches formed their bed, and some ashes at the other end shewed where their fire had been. They are sure to find their lodgings unoccupied on their return. He also shewed me the mountain, which, according to one plan, must be tunnelled should a carriage road be made in this direction to Spain. Such a thing is said to be in contemplation. Another line, through the Valley of Heas, is said to be more practicable.

"As we approached the cirque, I saw, on my right, some mules working up the mountain, towards the Port de Gavarnie—a much easier passage than the Port de Venasque. I also saw, in the same direction, a glacier, bluish in colour and broken in form; the only one I have seen that exactly resembles those of Switzerland.

"In returning, forty minutes from the Plateau brought me to the Church of Gavarnie. It is small, old, damp, and uninteresting; no inscription, nor anything to connect it with the Templars but its dedication to St. John. However, there was a commandery here; and the twelve skulls arranged in a cupboard in the church, are said to have belonged to the last twelve knights, decapitated here on the sup-

pression of the order. All this may be very true but it requires a good supply of travellers' faith to believe it. I deposited with the curé a trifle towards the repair of his church, and we dashed off for the hotel, where I was soon busily employed making acquaintance with the landlady's fried bacon and eggs. The promised trout did not make their appearance; their place was supplied by a nondescript bone of mutton, which turned out to be better than it looked.

We remained an hour to allow the horses to feed, and then, at ten minutes after twelve, started on our return. We were the first off, and, as my guide said, returned "si rondement" there was no danger of being overtaken. We got home in two hours and twenty minutes, including stops. One of them was considerable, as I waited to attempt a sketch of "le Grand Chaos," as seen from above. The effect is perhaps still more striking than from below, and its gloomy neighbour looks still more *sinister*. I thus got home at half-past two, after a most successful expedition. The collecting clouds, as we returned, shewed us the advantages of an early start.

## CHAPTER VI.

Disadvantages of a long residence in the mountain valleys—Barèges—Expedition to the Pic du Midi.

*August 1st.*—My maid was very ill yesterday, and just as W—— was going to get a doctor from St. Sauveur he most providentially met Dr. Taylor. The joy of seeing an English physician almost cured the poor girl, and relieved us from great anxiety. He so strongly recommends the waters of Cauterets for me, that we mean to try them. It was strange that I had just before almost made up my mind not to go there at all, but to let W—— make an excursion there to see the Lac de Gaube and return here the same evening, which might easily be done. So many people have abused the place to us that we expected to dislike it extremely.

We walked to St. Sauveur this morning, and,

feeling tired, I mounted a donkey, and went up to see a cascade on a considerable height above the town. The walk was very pretty, and the situation of the cascade fine; but there is not much water, nor is it well worth seeing; though the little excursion there was very pleasant.

There was a violent thunder-storm in the night, and much rain has fallen. The mountains are covered with fresh snow,—even the lower ones are quite white. In consequence of the cold weather, and this being a fête day, a great number of brown capuchins and red capulets have made their appearance. The men here wear capuchins as well as the women; and I have seen several venerable old men to-day in brown capuchins, carrying little children in their arms, whose baby heads were covered with red capulets.

These poor peasants are very good and affectionate people. I have remarked the peculiar tenderness shewn by the men to their children, and a great portion of their holiday enjoyment seems to be playing with their little ones. We have found, too, much kindness and civility among them—such as going out of their way to shew us ours, &c., and then refusing any remuneration. Goitres are very prevalent here;

almost all the old women, and many old men, are afflicted with them.

*Monday.*—I do not think that, on a near approach to mountains, they have at all the same attractive, friendly look as at a distance; on the contrary, instead of being dear friends they are more like enemies. Marks of destruction, the ravages of torrents, the woful effects of avalanches, are met with at every step. The rocks seem ready to fall and crush us, and the rivers rush along with savage fury and deafening noise. No images of peace, scarcely of happiness, meet the eye.

Even the industry which maintains the little fields, upon the almost perpendicular sides of these awful valleys, does not produce a pleasing impression. It torments me to think how human beings are ever to get safe up and down such fearful heights. Then there is a look of toil and care about the peasantry, and the frequent goitres have a most melancholy appearance.

All around is ever changing; torrents root up the fruit of many years toilsome industry. Here we have a valley that was formerly a lake*—

* Luchon.

there, a lake where there was formerly a mountain; here a chaos of rocks—then the storms are so frequent, and the thunder sounds so much more awful than in the plains.

These dull reflections were partly the result of a drive to Barèges to-day. What a woful place it is! A dirty single street of miserable houses, and full of sick people! The drive to Barèges is a continued, and, in some places, a very steep ascent; but the road is so good along the side of the formidable Bastan, that, during the ascent, one is not aware of its rapidity. In two places it passed through the beds of mountain torrents, now dry; but shewing, from their breadth, how destructive they can be.

This road is a singular combination of civilized and savage life; its own excellence being, as to formation, as good as road can be. Its breadth, the fine trees, and productive meadows which mark its course, are proofs of high civilization. Its great elevation, the impetuous river, almost a continued waterfall, and the rocky heights around, shew what this scene must originally have been.

Barèges, as a séjour d'agrement, does not deserve such an approach. It is a triste and me-

lancholy place; except for health, I cannot conceive how any one could wish to remain in it for an hour. It consists principally of a long, narrow street of inferior-looking houses. In no part of the Pyrenees have I seen disease so prominent as here—it meets one at every step. A sound resident must feel himself quite uncomfortable, as something distinct from the society of the place. It is also a military hospital; the soldiers' bath is under ground, where we were told they bathe "six à la fois." What a delightful recreation! The hospital is near the baths, where it narrows the street, and contributes not a little to the gloom of the town.

We had provided ourselves with some additional five-franc pieces, as we wished to make some purchases; but I might have left them at home, the shops, or perhaps more properly speaking, booths, held out no temptation.

It is singular, that in this place, frequented as it is, and at this moment with hardly a room unoccupied, there is not a regular bookseller's shop. The "Salon Litteraire" is at a grocer's, and his supply is very scanty. I asked for a number of the Album des Pyrénées, and was referred to the apothecary, who had a few books

arranged on one of his shelves. I do not think that either here or at St. Sauveur, such a thing as a map is to be had; indeed, the dearth of *mental* food throughout the Pyrenees is very striking, not excepting even Bagnères de Bigorre. I took a sketch from above the bridge, at the eastern extremity of the town.

The redeeming circumstance of Baréges is the walk in the wood which overhangs the town; the paths through it are kept in good order, and command fine points of view down the valley. We saw but few people moving about, and almost all were invalids; they stared at us, as much as to say—"What business have you here?—where are your crutches?" In returning, we were able to judge of the great height we had attained. The drag was put on as we started, and not taken off until we reached our own door, at Luz. We came very gently, and yet were only three-quarters of an hour en route.

*Wednesday, August 4th.*—Rome or Madrid—Italy or Spain?—are the weighty questions which now occupy our thoughts. I was most anxious for the Spanish plan. But this last week's suffering from head-ache and many other ail-

ments, has much shaken my courage, and I begin to turn towards the easy and beaten track of Italy with longing eyes. I see its pleasant towns, and comfortable inns, with the delightful security of past experience.

The remembrance of our former tour has all the balmy and soothing dimness of a glad dream, for it was a long time ago, and the eventful years which have passed since then have swept from my mind the recollection of all those little minor annoyances that must be our lot everywhere, and I remember only the pleasure it afforded. I had then lost but few of the dear friends, whose deaths seem, one by one, to have developed, by suffering, all the stronger portions of my disposition. I did not think or feel half so deeply then as I do now. Beautiful or striking objects did not make such a vivid impression; but I was in a careless, peaceful frame of mind, and the statues, pictures, and ruins I then beheld, left with me, as I said before, all the fascinating indistinctness of a beautiful dream, and seem to promise repose—that great attraction for a sick body—as well as enjoyment.

Here I am, unable to do anything: was so

fatigued with a little donkey-ride of three hours I took yesterday to the bridge of Scias, that I can hardly stand to-day, and was very ill all the evening. It was a beautiful excursion, however, to that Pont de Scias—the view of the waterfall from the curious double bridge very fine.

W—— went up to the Pic du Midi early this morning, and, to my great surprise, returned from his long expedition at two o'clock. I here insert his account of it:—

"I started for the Pic at half-past five, and then the weather promised everything that was favourable for the expedition, but did not turn out quite what I could have wished. It was only tolerably fine when I reached the top. In less than an hour we reached Baréges, and waited for a few minutes to purchase corn for the horses, to be given on the Pic, and then we continued our route. Immediately on leaving the town we ascended a steep hill, still keeping the left bank of the Bastan; a new road is now being made nearer the river, to avoid this ascent. After crossing a mountain-torrent of some consequence, we kept along the side of another height, which forms one boundary of the valley

of the Tourmalet; on the opposite hill is some neatly-cultivated ground, and several houses—it is called Tourmabon, and is a summer establishment of one of the villages near Luz.

"We now descended to a plain, close to the river, having a wood of beech on our right, called by my guide 'un forêt royale,' which is most carefully guarded. We then crossed the Bastan, at the entrance of the wild valley of Lieuz, separated by a rocky boundary from that of Escabons, which is said to be very wild also. In it is a lake, where are good trout, and which is rented by some one at Baréges for two hundred and fifty francs a-year; it is one of the sources of the Bastan.

"We continued to ascend the valley of Tourmalet, having two fine points on the right, the Picquette, and the Pic d'Estade, which is very striking; the glacier of Neouvielle came gradually into view; we had the Tourmalet in front, and behind us a noble view of the Canmille, its Pic and the Barbe de Bouc becoming every moment more important. We were still on the road from Baréges to Bagnères de Bigorre, by the Tourmalet: it is good, selon M. le Guide.

"We now left the road, to traverse a steep pasture, in which we found the rude hut of a shepherd. It grows a great profusion of lilies, now out of bloom. A steep and rather rocky ascent introduced us to wilder scenery, and the summit of the Pic du Midi came into sight, but the wind came from the north, and passing clouds too plainly shewed a change of weather. A bed of snow which we crossed proved that we had already attained a great height, and the Picquette and Pic d'Estade began to sink into comparative insignificance, as the Neouvielle and its neighbours came more into sight.

"In about three hours and a quarter, we reached the height which overlooks the Lac d'Oncet. Nothing can exceed the wildness of this lake and its situation: it is still, to a considerable extent, frozen, as a large part is occupied by a black, half-dissolved glacier. Inglis says this lake is the highest, or one of the highest, in Europe, and gives it an altitude of nearly 8000 feet above the level of the sea. The water is too cold for fish; it lies in the midst of rocky heights, a picture of quiet desolation, strongly contrasting in character with the furious Bastan, which issues from it. Near the bank, I

saw a botanist, who has been for some time here pursuing his studies. My guide spoke of the good fortune of a friend of his, who is guide to this gentleman: he receives for himself and two horses, twelve francs a-day and their food.

"The path is narrow, but well made, which winds round one boundary of the lake, to reach the Brêche de Bagnères de Bigorre. As we advanced two formidable-looking shepherd's dogs seemed inclined to oppose our progress; but it came to nothing but barking, and a fine deep growl; they were of the large, white breed, said to be very fierce in defence of their flocks. The summit of the Pic du Midi is 1860 feet above the lake, and is approached by a path which is steep, but so well made, as to make riding practicable even to the top. It is, however, hard work for horses; so, about a quarter of the way up, we dismounted. The path, as I have already said, is so good as not to be at all dangerous; but it is necessarily narrow and unprotected, and there was something appalling in the thought that a false step might send one toppling over many hundred feet, into that cold, dull lake below.

"The view, as we ascended, of the chain of the Pyrenees was magnificent; luckily, the mist,

which threatened disastrously as to the view of the plain, left the part most interesting to me, the mountains, perfectly clear. It extends far away along the eastern chain; nearer to me I recognised old acquaintances in the Maledetta, and its companions, the Carabolus, Glacier de la Vache, and the heights about Lac d'Oo. Immediately in front, the striking feature is the Neouveille (which means 'Old Snow,' shewing its large glacier, and, from its position, nearly obstructs the view of Mont Perdu—then the Marboré's snowy plain, for so it now appeared with its rocky wall, divided by the Brêche. The Tour de la Fausse Brêche, appeared on a level with me. The Vignemale was *almost* a new acquaintance, for from the Bergons, only a small portion is visible. The great heights of the Mercadan, displaying almost a greater extent of snow than any of the range, were quite new to me.

"We had now lost sight of the lake, as we advanced nearer the summit, and, having crossed a bed of snow, reached a more open spot, just at the foot of the great height. Here was some pasture, so we unbridled our horses, and having placed their corn before them, left them to themselves. The air had become cold,

and a high wind had arisen, driving the mist rapidly before it, and I had the mortification to see the top, partially covered; over a shoulder of the mountain, I caught a glimpse of the plain below.

" On we toiled, and when we reached the top nothing was to be seen; even the mountains were all covered. A kind of tower, with a recess inside, has been erected on the top. I took shelter there, and we held a council of war as to what was to be done. My guide, influenced, I dare say, by the cold wind and want of breakfast, said there was no hope of amendment, and I thought myself destined to a thick mist for the remainder of the day; but I was delightfully disappointed, for, soon after quitting the top, the mist to the south completely rolled away, and I had the mountains again in all their splendour, increased in effect as the shadows of the clouds passed over them. This gave me hopes, and I fortunately waited, and, lying down on a shelving rock immediately over the plain, I had the satisfaction to see the mist lifted up like a curtain, and the chequered plain below became visible, overhung by scattered clouds, but itself in bright sunshine.

"Tarbes lay immediately before me. The trees above Bagnères de Bigorre looked close at hand; and I saw below, as on a map, the different roads which we had travelled over. I remained nearly half an hour on this spot, in the hope that the mist, which still hung upon the summit, would roll away, but it did not. However, I had a noble view, and an excellent idea of how splendid it must be on a perfectly clear day.

"The position of the Pic du Midi is superior to that of any of the great heights I have visited, Mount Ætna excepted. Placed in front of the chain, it commands the Pyrenees to a great extent, and rising to so great a height abruptly from the plain, has an extent of view perhaps unparalleled. How I rejoiced that I had not yielded to my guide's advice, and immediately come down! I saw two travellers below me turn back after they had reached the snow. I suppose that appearances with them were, at the moment, unfavourable. They descended by the Brêche to Bagnères de Bigorre. By it there is a way practicable for horses, but inferior to that by the Tourmalet. As we descended, I had an opportunity of judging more justly of the height we had attained.

"When over the lake, well might I have said—

'How dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes below!'

I walked as far as the shepherd's cottage, and met a party ascending. By the time they got up, a heavy cloud had, I fear, taken permanent possession of the summit. I did not hold out much hope to them. We now soon reached the Bigorre road, and moved rapidly downwards. When on the side of the mountain above Baréges, I saw, from its position, how liable it must be to suffer from avalanches. It lies in the gorge which terminates this narrow valley, where the snow must accumulate immensely, and in which are the Bastan and two or three other torrents 'as wicked as itself,' to direct this accumulation against the town. In consequence, that part where the shops are, is entirely removed after the season, and only a few people remain in charge of the deserted houses.

"The new bath below the town is in a very perilous situation, and has already narrowly escaped destruction from a torrent, which every winter destroys the road, as it hurries to join the Bastan. The day turned out very fine, and as we did not stop at Baréges, I reached home a few minutes before two; thus

doing the entire in eight hours and twenty minutes. I was told it would have occupied ten hours. I had a most interesting expedition, which I would not have lost on any account."

## CHAPTER VII.

Ride to Cauterets—Advantages of a narrow street, and of having nothing to do—Romance of real life—Comparison between French and English agreeableness.

*Cauterets, Saturday, August 8th.*—This place is more of a town than any of the baths we have seen except Bagnères de Bigorre. More shops—more bustle and gaiety. Our rooms look into a street—opposite houses almost shut out the view of the mountains, and hide from us the narrowness of the valley; yet this is narrower than any we have seen, and the mountains rise more abruptly on all sides; so that I am almost glad to have houses to break the prospect; and we have cheerful-looking neighbours—Parisian belles making their toilette at one window—in an adjoining room morning visits going on, at others, parties probably arranging for to-

morrow; and all this so near, that I can almost *see* what they are talking about.

To look upon a variety of little interiors of this kind is very amusing. To-night, when the rooms were lighted up, the little scenes I saw put me in mind of well-acted comedies.

One old gentleman seemed particularly anxious to read the newspaper, while a young fair girl, with malicious blue eyes, was equally determined he should not. Every time he had adjusted his spectacles, and got the paper comfortably in the right place, she said something to him, exciting his attention to the evidently *sotto voce* conversation of a handsome man and a beautiful young woman who sat in the next window.

She was a dark-eyed beauty, slightly resembling the young girl, and the likeness of both to the old gentleman shewed that he had a father's right to be interested about the little flirtation which was going on in the moon-lit window. But the dark girl did not much approve of her younger sister's espieglerie, still less did her lover. The old gentleman was gradually induced to join in their conversation; then the young girl, seeing the mischief she had done by the sorrowful looks of her sister, en-

deavoured, as I thought, to remedy matters. She placed herself between them and the lights which burnt on the table where the old man sat, while she shewed him some prints or drawings. But this would not do, and the offer of his ponderous snuff-box, which she fetched, was equally inefficacious. He threw down his newspaper with a determined air. Whether he did so because he disapproved of the young man's suit, I cannot say, but he seemed to say something in a loud voice; for an old lady who had been comfortably dozing all the time, in a red velvet fauteuil, suddenly woke up, and did not appear to be in a very good humour. A good deal of bowing and talking ensued, and soon afterwards the young man took his leave.

The dark girl remained in the same place at the open window, her slender throat extended as she looked wistfully for a few minutes down the street, but it was evident that her fine eyes were not gratified by meeting with the object they sought, for I thought a tear stood glistening under their dark lashes. The young sister came near, playfully took her hand, and whispered some smiling words in her ear. She pointed towards the old pair, who now sat in earnest con-

versation near the table with the lights. This sight, however, did not seem to console the dark beauty; she rather pettishly withdrew her hand from her sister, and leaned out of the window. The sunny face of the fair girl now became clouded; she mused for a few minutes, alternately looking at her pensive sister and the old pair, who seemed to be disputing about something.

At last she seemed to form a sudden resolution, and, with that winning gracefulness which the half-spoiled youngest child of old parents frequently possesses, she boldly interrupted their conversation, sat down on the old gentleman's knee, and, in spite of his endeavours to get rid of her, and without minding the angry looks of her mother, began to stroke his face.

And thus the kind-hearted, thoughtless girl endeavoured to repair the mischief she felt guilty of having done to her sister by interrupting perhaps the first tête-à-tête she had ever had with the young gentleman; and soon she so far succeeded, that the mother went up to the window, and spoke with a kinder air to the sorrowing girl.

They had a long and earnest talk together, the sight of which interested me much; for I am

sure the old lady's words were full of wisdom, and the young girl gradually felt the force of her arguments, though I rather fancy they were not quite in favour of her wishes. In the mean time, my little blue-eyed friend was talking most earnestly to the old man. With the resolute pettishness of a spoiled child, she would listen to none of his sage arguments. She kissed his broad forehead, playfully smoothing the frowns that gathered there; and at last, finding her little reasoning of no use, she burst into tears, and, clasping her hands together, knelt down at his feet. At this interesting moment, a servant provokingly came in to close the outer shutters. The little girl jumped up and walked demurely across the room, the mother and daughter withdrew from the window, and all the scene was closed from my view.

I had looked upon a common little scene—one of frequent occurrence—but it is impossible thus to view the workings of different characters, to see thus plainly the turning-point that makes or mars the happiness of two human beings, without feeling a deep interest in their fate. What sage reasons the parents may have for objecting to the lover's suit, I cannot tell. He may be

poor, and his independent, majestic air makes me imagine he is a Spaniard—an exile, perhaps, who has lost everything in the cause of Don Carlos; but, to judge by appearance, he is quite worthy of the beautiful girl's affection. Well, perhaps to-morrow's inspection may enable me to form a better judgment.

And now let us return to Cauterets itself, and how we came here, and, more important still to me, how I got well enough to come, on horseback, too, and the whole way in a broiling sunshine.

I believe it was the fear of being persuaded to try the waters of St. Sauveur, which the French physician so much wanted me to do; and the fear of their disagreeing, and my being laid up in a place where, during the ten days of our stay, I had never been well enough to make any excursion, or do scarcely anything. These apprehensions gave me a panic, and endued me with energy to get up at six o'clock this morning, and persuade W—— to let us start. No horses could be found for the carriage; but as I always meant to ride, in order to enjoy more fully the fine scenery of the mountain passes, a steed and guide were soon found. We started soon after

eight, W—— on foot, leaving the servants and carriage to follow, whenever horses could be found.

After leaving Pierrefitte, it became intensely hot. Quite overpowered, we longed to turn off the road, and rest under the shade of those fine trees which clothe the sides of the mountains, even to their highest summits. But we were afraid of not getting rooms, as we have heard alarming accounts of the fulness of Cauterets, and the extreme difficulty of finding any sort of accommodation. We hurried on, therefore, and arrived about one o'clock. First went to the Hôtel de l'Europe, having been cautioned by many people against the Hotel de France. No rooms were to be found; but a civil, active waiter made us come in to rest while he went out to see what apartments could be had. It was the public table-d'hôte room where we waited, and filled with the odour of departed breakfasts—French ones, I mean; not the sweet-smelling tea, coffee, and delicious hot rolls of an English morning's meal, but strongly tinctured with garlic, fried bacon, omelettes, &c., the original sweetness of which a very hot day does not improve. But any shade was delightful, after the complete broiling we had experienced;

and we were almost asleep on our chairs when interrupted by the smiling waiter, whose broad face looked full of success.

He had discovered, he said, just the thing we wanted—the only thing in all Cauterets. It was so lucky to find it just disengaged! Numberless families were waiting for rooms, and would have given anything to have known of these. And so clean, too, and only à deux pas de l'hôtel!—and then the landlady—une bonne femme; in short, all was perfection; so we rubbed our eyes, tried to feel equally pleased and hopeful, and accompanied our zealous friend to view the rooms.

They were not quite what we should have chosen, had the whole town been at our command; W—— being obliged to dress in our sitting room, the maid to sleep in a darkish closet, and the man in another house; but, considering all difficulties, we were pretty well satisfied, particularly with the price, which is less than we have paid anywhere (seven francs), and the woman very civil—in short, we are tolerably comfortable; our salon looks on the street, and bed-room into a small garden and court behind.

The noise is, however, tremendous. Such a

*tapage* has been going on, since our arrival, in preparation for the fête which is to take place to-morrow—drums beating, to announce the arrival of travelling merchants, who are pouring in from all parts of the country, and who advertise and puff their goods by beat of drum; then, the expected fête seems to have imparted additional vigour to that curse of the Pyrenees, the cracking of whips; trumpeters and German singers are also here. We cannot, indeed, quarrel with the latter, for they sing some very pretty Tyrolese airs, which have a beautiful effect among mountain scenery—a gratification rather unusual in the Pyrenees.

The French are not, I think, a musical people: they have no love for music; an observation which might, until lately, have been justly made as to England; but I rejoice to find that with us a taste for music is rapidly advancing.

But to return to this day's history. After installing ourselves in our lodging, and drinking some delicious eau sucré à la fleure d'orange, sent by the civil waiter, W—— went to take a bath, and, as I felt much rested, I started to explore the town. Its aspect pleased me, and that of the various shady walks which diverge through

forests, upwards, in all directions; and the different baths, nestled in little, rural nooks among the rocks and trees. The shops and lodging-houses, too, have all a cheerful and comfortable look.

To the right, a mountain—the Gambas, I believe—overhangs Cauterets. It seems actually to project over part of the town, and yet its sides are quite covered with wood, and it has a look of greater repose than any Pyrenean mountain I have yet seen, and is less cut up by fearful water-courses. How the large trees find root, and remain apparently suspended in mid-air, I cannot imagine. The other mountains are near, but not so fearfully steep and overhanging as that dark, frowning Gambas.

After dinner, we walked by the river on the road to the Pont d'Espagne and Lac de Gaube. We saw a fine waterfall at the end of the valley, rushing down into the river; and watched the last sun-beams on the mountain-tops. The sky was more intensely blue than I ever remember to have seen it, and a few light clouds; which here and there hovered over the mountains, were a bright, lovely pink. The forest-clad heights near us, and the more distant snow-covered

peaks, assumed beautiful hues—the combination of the two prominent colours in the sky. The tints were very peculiar, and we never remarked a sky which preserved its decided pink and blue so long.

At last, these bright colours almost suddenly vanished—all became pale, till the moon began to tinge, with its warm southern light, the higher summits, and then a sort of half-daylight returned, even to the valley.

Half-past ten o'clock, and the carriage not yet arrived. We have no books or anything with us, which affords me time to trace our opposite neighbours' little histories, and to record them on a thin, ghost-like sheet of paper, with the remains of a miserable pen lent me by our landlady. We are beginning to be uneasy about the servants and carriage. The road, however, is good all the way, and the high and narrow passes between Pierrefitte and this place are not so terrific as those between it and Luz. Indeed, there is nothing in either to alarm a person whose nerves and health are not in a troubled state.

*Monday, August 8th.*—The carriage came, however, just as we had made up our minds to do

without the comforts it contained, so I doubly enjoyed them. After a long, good sleep, awoke much refreshed, and glad to find myself in a new place.

I have been amused this morning by seeing more of home-life in the opposite house, and have discovered a jealous wife and two rival beauties, but I have looked in vain for the rejected suitor. The dark girl seems unhappy, though resigned; the blue-eyed sister looks still pettish, I fear, as if her pride were more hurt at not having been able to carry her point than at her sister's grief; and thus she suffers more from her own wayward disposition than her innocent sister does at her own disappointment.

The lover does not appear—has he been formally rejected by the parents? or is he piqued by their behaviour on Saturday night? or has he been refused by the beautiful girl herself? I cannot make out the real state of the case, though I feel most curious to know. She seems to have such a well-regulated mind—that dark girl!—and has certainly not been spoilt, as I much fear her pretty little sister will be.

We have seen no English here. All the little scenes I view in the opposite interiors are enacted

by French people, I think, of the best classes. The women very lady-like, and their manners differ in nothing from those of the best society in England. There is the same quiet air—the same half-indifference—in fact, the same natural manners, totally devoid of any affectation—such as really well-bred English women now possess. There is no show of exaggerated feeling—no appearance of greater sensitiveness and energy than they really possess, which vulgar people generally assume, and which we are apt to attribute to the French. Yet, though the higher classes of each country resemble each other much, I must confess that in general the French are much more agreeable in conversation.

Miss Sedgwick says, in her interesting "Letters from Abroad," that "there is something in the Anglo-Saxon race essentially adverse to the spirit and grace of society—that our conversation may be, indeed, 'the feast of wit,' but it is not 'the flow and mingling of soul.'"

This is very true, and particularly so among the clever set of wits with whom celebrated strangers are most likely to become acquainted on their arrival in England. There is, indeed, but little flow of soul, but there is great combat

of wit; and I cannot help thinking that some reform is wanting in the tone and fashion of conversation among English people. We are still extremely reserved, however forward or witty we may be; and this is to be regretted, for our education, particularly that of English women, is such, that if some could throw off the restraint which shuts up their ideas, and if others could get rid of the pretension to wit and the wish to shine in conversation that almost extinguishes a lofty train of thought, we should then be more agreeable than people of most other countries. We meet plenty of persons in society who make us laugh, but very few who make us think. Most of our great wits, too, are professed talkers, and though it is extremely amusing to hear them, yet, as they create a certain degree of awe, there is very little conversation when they are present.

On the other hand, some are of opinion that society should be a recreation—that most persons would rather laugh than think—and that there is more real enjoyment in hearing one or two persons who take all the trouble of conversation on themselves, than in any general interchange of

thought. This is the case more particularly in England, because we are still the most reserved people in the world. And yet, where so much is sacrificed to society, is it not strange that we do not endeavour to make conversation more "the flow of the soul?" There is a strong passion in England for society; old country-houses are deserted, and watering-places created, because we cannot be satisfied, as our forefathers were, with a life of comparative retirement. It is wonderful how much is sacrificed to this passion, by persons, too, who do not appear, after all, really to enjoy society—for how can there be enjoyment where there is constraint?

*August the 9th.*— A rainy day prevents our intended expedition to the Lac de Gaube, and the clouds look so low and heavy as to threaten us with a continuance of wet weather. We find our rooms very comfortable; and the opposite houses, with their interesting interiors, are a great resource in this gloomy day. We like this place (as yet) much better than we expected. Many friends had abused it, saying the country was less picturesque, the town dirty, houses and fare bad and dear, &c. We

find all the reverse; and I think, too, the situation is more picturesque than any we have yet seen, and there appears to be a much greater variety of those pretty *near* walks, which are of such value to an invalid.

In short, I am most agreeably surprised in the place, and should enjoy it extremely, if I had not got a sort of mountain surfeit. I long to be in a plain again, and wonder how I could ever have quarrelled with a wide open country, a fine low, distant horizon, and boundless expanse of sky!

Some of the few English I have met in these beautiful regions congratulated themselves that it has not yet become the fashion for English people to travel here. I often think how selfish it is to regret meeting our countrymen touring in all directions. Ought we not rather to rejoice that others find enjoyment in the same manner as ourselves? And though many may be vulgar, and appear not to appreciate all the beauty they see, yet we may trust that to behold loveliness has an exalting effect on the mind in every grade of society.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Pont d'Espagne—Lac de Gaube—End of the Romance of Real Life—Mont Né—Tremendous thunder-storm.

*Tuesday*, 10.—*The Lac de Gaube.*—We had a delicious day for our excursion. We started at half-past nine ; I in a chaise à porteurs with four men, and W—— and the guide on foot. The cascades we passed near are the finest I have seen in the Pyrenees, and some of the scenery the most picturesque. The pines, which are here mingled with other fine trees, add their aromatic fragrance to the thousand forest perfumes, which are always delicious, and their dark hue gives more vigour to the colouring. The road runs by the side of the torrent as far as the Pont d'Espagne, and it rushes down in a succession of cascades, as if on purpose to produce beautiful pictures. The whole scene had

to-day an air of fête. The spray produced numerous rainbows in all directions, sometimes peeping up through the trees, shewing where a fall more gigantic than the rest was hid beneath; and sometimes these beautiful bows ran half across the path, when I had the childish delight of passing through their lovely tints.

The Pont d'Espagne is thrown across the deep and narrow passage in the rock through which the united Gaves—the Marcadan and that from the Lac de Gaube—flow. A hut, where refreshments may be had, is built on the rock above this passage. Beyond it, we crossed the Gave de Marcadan by the Pont de Joseph, and then came in sight of the finest of the falls; indeed, one of the grandest and most curious spectacles I ever saw.

Three impetuous torrents here unite: the Gave du Lac de Gaube comes tumbling straight down from a great height immediately in front of us; another descends from as great a height a little to the right, but runs more playfully round the trees and rocks, forming a graceful bend before it meets the Gave de Gaube; and then they both rush down the perpendicular steep, close under the rock where we stood, and



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are almost lost together in the narrow and profound abyss.

Turning a little to the left, but without quitting the rock, we looked towards a spot whence a thundering roar proceeded, and there we saw the meeting of those united torrents with the furious Marcadan. It is at a fearful depth below; and they clash with such force against each other as to send the spray high into the air, and the whole neighbourhood vibrates with the shock. Their rocky bed then becomes so narrow, that one cannot imagine how the three impetuous torrents can be compressed into such a narrow cleft; and the eye runs on with much curiosity to watch their exit and further progress, in the distant valley below.

All this scene is wild, and yet ornamented; the trees grow very fantastically, springing straight from the sides of the precipitous rocks which form the passage, over whose extremity the Pont d'Espagne is thrown.

The Valley de Geret, which we had ascended from Cauterets, here divides into two branches; that on the right is the Valley de Marcadan, which leads into Spain by the Baths of Penticosa. The "Port" is about five hours from this spot, and is described as a good road on the

French side, but has a very rapid descent on that of Spain.

We proceeded by the other branch, which leads to the Lac de Gaube, and passed through more sylvan and enchanting scenery.

"Here dwelt that spell upon the mountain's brow,
Which calls to life the bosom's generous glow;
Here smiled that spirit on the mirror-lake,
From which our feelings holy calmness take;
And breeze, and bloom, and change of night and day,
Held commune with the soul's more noble part,
And fain would lead it, on its destined way,
All dignified the mind, all calm and good the heart." V.

After all the splendid scenery one meets on the road, the Lac de Gaube itself is rather disappointing; it is like passing through a gigantic vestibule and staircase into a common-sized room.

The Vignemale shewed itself in great distinctness before us; but its form is not fine, nor its apparent height, as seen from the lake, great. The glacier is as yet covered with snow. This mountain is, I think, the third in height of the Pyrenees, being 10,086 feet, yielding only to the Maledetta and Mont Perdu. The lake is, in every respect, inferior to Lac d'Oo, being more melancholy, but not nearly so sublime. The

smooth surface of the water was only broken by the single boat, which most sadly resembles in form and hue a floating coffin.

A low rock, in front of the little inn, projects into the lake, and on it has been placed a monument to the unfortunate pair who were lost in the lake, having imprudently gone in the little boat without the boatman. The stone is surrounded by an iron rail. The inscription on the land side is in French, and nearly effaced; we had some difficulty to decipher it. We heard that some person from Bordeaux was to be at the lake that very day, to restore the inscription. It is as follows :—

" A la memoire de
WILLIAM HENRY PATTISON, Ecuyer,
Avocat de Lincoln's Inn, Londres,
et de SARAH FRANCES, son épouse,
Agés un de 31 ans, l'autre 20.
Mariés depuis un mois seulement,
un accident affreux les enleva à
leurs parens et à leurs amis inconsolables.
Ils furent engloutis dans le lac,
le 20 Sep., 1832.
Leurs restes, transportés en
Angleterre, reposent à Witham,
dans le conté d'Essex."

The lady was carried in a " chaise à porteurs," and the porters saw from the bank the occur-

rence of the accident without being able to afford any assistance. The gentleman, it appears, either from balancing imprudently, or from some other cause, fell out of the boat; the screams of the unfortunate lady were heard, and soon after, whether in an attempt to save him, or in despair at seeing him sink, she fell from the boat also. Her body, partly supported by her dress, was found the same day; his, not for nineteen days after. There is, on the stone facing the lake, an English inscription, but it escaped our notice. Milnes has well described this sad occurrence, in a little poem called, "Tragedy of the Lac de Gaube." The following detached passages record the event:—

"All gaily shone that little lake,
And nature, sternly fair,
Put on a sparkling countenance,
To greet that merry pair."

They ventured in the dangerous boat, and were so delighted with the scene, or their own glad feeling, that they stood up and danced, and rocked it to and fro in a childish glee, and then—

"One poise too much, he headlong fell,—
She, stretching out to save
A feeble arm, was borne adown
Within that glittering grave:

One moment, and the gush went forth,
Of music—mingled laughter,—
The struggling splash and deathly shriek
Were there the instant after."

Our expedition to-day was far more pleasant and much less fatiguing than any I have made. We were not above two hours going—exclusive of a stop of full half an hour at Pont d'Espagne—and not much more than an hour returning.

We walked this evening along some pretty paths in the direction of La Grange de la Reine Hortense. Great variety of scenery—some so sylvan as to appear like the deep recesses of a forest; then a rural bit suddenly occurs, with meadows and farm-houses, and all the pretty accompaniments of happy peasant life; which is again exchanged for a wild scene, where gigantic rocks are thrown about in all directions, and nature assumes its sternest aspect, and where the mountains tower above, and appear to stop all further progress; then one comes suddenly upon an eminence, which commands a more extended view of the varied scenes one has traversed. All this may be enjoyed here while walking on comfortable paths, without fearful torrents to cross or corkscrews and scalas to toil up,

as is so much the case in all the fine scenery about Luchon. Yes, the walks of Cauterets have to me a charm which none of the other baths possess—a sort of mysterious loveliness, which ever, after a walk or a ride, seems to leave the impression on the mind that one has not half enjoyed it, that there were a thousand little hidden paths, and nooks, and sunny glades diverging on all sides from the one followed, and each more lovely than the other. This, to my mind, is the perfection of scenery, for it excites the imagination, and makes one dream of even greater beauty than meets the eye.

The number of Spanish peasants, who come over the mountains here from Aragon, add very much to the enjoyment of the place. Their dress, particularly that of the men, is more picturesque than any I ever saw, though I thought none could be more beautiful than that of the Catalonians we saw in the Valley of Aran. These wear a high conical hat, with a broad brim, embroidered and tasseled; a coat of green velvet, with a richly-embroidered collar and breast, a waistcoat of brocaded satin, a red, or sometimes lilac, silk scarf tied round the waist, brown striped velvet culottes, garters

embroidered in gold, blue stockings, and sandals. Some have a large brown cloak hanging over one shoulder, which does not conceal their brilliant attire, and they hold it with such a graceful and regal air, that one cannot imagine those majestic and most independent-looking beings can be peasants.

We had some thoughts of crossing the Marcadan, and passing through the Valley of Marcadan, into Spain, to sleep at the Baths of Penticosa, which may be done in eight hours, and then another eight hours to Eaux Chaudes; but, on inquiry, we find the difficulties for me would be insurmountable. The passage into Spain, too, is reported to be much easier from the Eaux Bonnes or Chaudes, crossing over Gabas; so I have still some faint hope of being able to do it from thence.

Our opposite neighbours still continue to interest us. The last thing I see before I go to bed is a figure, muffled in a cloak, walking up and down before the door of the opposite house. His majestic step, and that peculiar tread which no other country has, shews him to be a Spaniard; and who can it be but the dark girl's lover? She, however, does not seem aware of this, for her shutters remain inexorably closed. She has still a dejected

Sketched by Lady Chatterton and drawn on stone by Bichebois.

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THE TOWN OF CAUTERETZ

Pyrenees

though resigned air, which seems to shew that she has either made up her mind to her fate, or thinks he is lost to her for ever.

*Friday*, 13*th*.—W—— went this morning to the summit of the Mont Né, and had a most propitious, though extremely hot day.

I went up to the Ballière, in a chaise à porteurs, to drink my glasses of water—began yesterday, but found the walk up there, in sunshine, much too fatiguing, so I was obliged to have recourse to the chair. Afterwards I took a sketch of the town, from the path leading to Mont Né.

I think this place is cooler, in very hot weather, than any we have been in, and much drier, too, for there is less cultivation, and therefore less irrigation about it. The forests of fine beech trees which clothe the mountains, come down close to the town, and, fortunately, leave but little room for fields, and consequent water-courses, and their accompanying formal rows of poplars, that I got so tired of at the other mountain baths. All this renders the air of Cauterets much more pure and invigorating, and it is the only place where it has felt and smelt as if it really belonged to mountains, though, in reality, I believe Cauterets is not higher, if so high, as Luz, or Luchon.

How lovely are these clear starlight nights! Last evening, we went up to the Bains de Cæsar, and rambled among the woods above, but the paths were so steep, I was soon obliged to come down as well as I could, wondering how those gigantic beeches, to whose roots I clung, were supported, and how they were kept from falling upon the town that lay at a fearful depth below.

I like to look down, from a height, upon a town, and see its busy stir, and think of all the world of turmoil, and thought, and feeling, which lies in a space that one can apparently cover with the hand. I recognised the roof of our little, humble dwelling, and its more consequential opposite neighbours, and thought of all the scenes I had witnessed there.

*Saturday night.*—W—— had a delicious day for his expedition to Mont Né. He has written an interesting account of it, which, however, I have not room to insert.

A Spaniard, from Saragossa, is going about the town, selling chocolate, and his dress is most gorgeous and beautiful. His high conical hat is richly decorated with gold and silver filigree buttons, and the same ornaments fasten his striped velvet dress at the knee; the waistcoat, of brocaded

satin, is profusely adorned with silver reals; his stockings are beautifully ornamented with open work, and the sandal, or Espartillo, fastened with purple velvet ribbon. He is a tall, handsome man, and carries about decorated baskets full of chocolate, in little coloured boxes, or in papers, tied with different coloured ribbon. W—— brought him to our rooms, that I might see his dress, and buy some of his very tempting-looking and most tastefully-arranged merchandise, which proved to be the best chocolate I ever tasted. It is a most useful thing to take with one in a long walk, or mountain expedition. I find that a little bit gives me much support, and sometimes quite revives me.

This evening we took a pretty walk—first along the high road to Pierrefitte, for about half a mile, and then turning to the left, crossed a wooden bridge over the river, and mounted a most inviting-looking path, along the rocky sides of one of those green knolls which project here and there into this valley, and add so much to its beauty.

At the summit we had a lovely view, both ways, of the stern mountains, and their magnificent mantle of forest; and immediately beneath

us, on the lower part of the same verdant knoll, was a little farm-house, with its fruit-garden, orchard, and beehives. The family was eating the evening meal before the door; the goats were quietly browsing; and the fowls, with their young broods, were receiving a portion of the children's supper; and the whole aspect of the place seemed to breathe love and peace.

Yet, crime and sorrow find their way even among scenes which appear fitted alone for innocence and joy. A short distance from that lovely spot, in the upper valley, near a high projecting rock we call the castle—a narrow defile of that steep mountain—was the scene, two years ago, of the fearful tragedy that W—— related in the account of his expedition to Mont Né. He said—

"In our course downwards from Mont Né, the narrow path lay alongside of a steep ravine, near it is a cross erected, at the spot which, just two years ago, was the scene of an atrocious event, shewing how highly the right of water is valued.

"The meadows of two farmers had a stream in common; some dispute arose between them as to its use. The weaker of the two, a man of

bad character, afraid to meet the other in fair fight, resolved to lie in wait for him. One evening, on this very path, as the other was returning from his grange, loaded with milk and wood, just at a turn of the path, he suddenly started out upon his victim, and having struck him with a hatchet, tumbled him down the ravine.

" It appears that the unfortunate man, having lost his load, contrived to struggle up to the road again, where his antagonist again attacked him, and completed his purpose; the body was found the following day. The bloody hatchet was the chief witness against the murderer. The evidence being only circumstantial, he was condemned to the gallies, where he soon afterwards died. 'They have a way there,' said Baran, 'of getting rid, in a very short time, of those they wish to get rid of.'"

How it pains one to think of crime, and consequent misery, when contemplating such a scene as we witnessed from that beautiful spot! The air was so balmy, the smell of wild flowers and forest trees so delicious, the feel of mere existence in such a place—so delightful, that it was hard to imagine that any evil pas-

sions could trouble those who habitually dwelt there.

Yet I felt it was well to know that such was the case, for some scenes are so beautiful—and we have, even in this world, some moments of bliss—so perfect, and, if I may venture to say it, so devoid of all bad feeling, that we seem journeying towards heaven on a path of roses. In these moments, we sometimes forget our innate corruption, and the dire necessity there is that death and suffering should fit us for an immortality, to which alone we are heirs by the cruel and ignominious crucifixion of our Lord. Thus, every event in this evil world has some good end, and the fearful crime committed by that unfortunate man serves as a warning to lower our pride, and make us remember that no heavenly scenery — no solitary and peaceful-looking abode—can guard our evil hearts from the temptations of sin.

We lingered till the short twilight was fading away, and then hurried down, for there was no moon, and the sky was fast overspreading with dark clouds. Long before we reached home, a storm came on, and the black darkness was now and then broken by flashes of lightning so vivid

that every mountain peak was brilliantly illuminated, and the rushing torrent looked, for the moment, like a stream of fire; and those green knolls, which an hour before were tinged with the calm hues of soft declining day, now stood out like grey spectres, frowning over the valley, or shone with a lurid and fearful glare. The forest trees, which before were motionless, now rocked fearfully, their giant branches swung to and fro, as if, suddenly possessed by some evil spirit, they were savagely exulting over the work of destruction. The thunder crashed, and echoed from mountain to mountain; rain fell in torrents, and the swollen river, and its many tributary waterfalls, redoubled their roar. The whole valley seemed suddenly changed from heaven to hell—a practical illustration, thought I, of the fearful instability of all peace and joy here below.'

" A sign was on creation. You beheld
All things encolour'd in a sulph'rous hue,
As day were sick with fear. The haggard clouds
O'erhung the utter lifelessness of air;
The top boughs of the forest, all aghast,
Stared in the face of Heav'n; the deep-mouth'd wind,
That hath a voice to bay the armed sea,
Fled with a low cry like a beaten hound;

And only that askance the shadows flew
Some open-beaked birds in wilderment,
Naught stirr'd abroad. All dumb did Nature seem,
In expectation of the coming storm.

"It came in power. You soon might hear afar
The footsteps of the martial thunder sound
Over the mountain battlements: the sky
Being deep stained with hues fantastical,
Red like to blood, and yellow like to fire;
And black like plumes at funerals; overhead
You might behold the lightning faintly gleam
Amid the clouds which thrill and gape aside,
And straight again shut up their solemn jaws,
As if to interpose between Heaven's wrath
And Earth's despair. Interposition brief!
Darkness is gathering out her mighty pall
Above us, and the pent-up rain is loosed,
Down trampling in its fierce delirium."

We were extremely pleased when we caught a glimpse of the lamps in the town, almost expecting to find it swept away by the furious elements, or buried under some of those gigantic rocks which overhang it. Still more delighted were we to return to our rooms, and, closing all the outer shutters, sat down to our quiet table, and candles, whose steady light looked so pleasantly tranquil and comfortable, after all the fitful glare and turmoil we had witnessed in our walk.

We are preparing to start to-morrow, and I am quite pleased to feel sorry at the idea of leaving this place. Departure is very seldom, with me, a subject of regret. It is but too often my happiest moment, and this is to me a cause of regret and reproach, for I fancy it shews such an extremely unamiable and unkindly disposition; and yet, perhaps it may be thus accounted for—that hope being one of my strongest feelings, and ill health often preventing my enjoyment of the present moment, I always look forward with delight to an expectation of happiness from any change. When I am quite well, and free from all bodily suffering, I enjoy such happiness—such a vivid conviction of the goodness of God, and confidence in ultimate and eternal bliss, that it seems beyond the nature of things—beyond what was intended, in this probationary state, and, therefore, that I must suffer, in order to fulfil the law of our being. During these short intervals of freedom from pain, I am in such high spirits, that, waking or sleeping, my enjoyment is perfect. I smile in my sleep, and often wake up in a fit of laughter. When in health, I can, indeed—

"Look through earth's gladness to the gladder skies;"

And feel like—

> "A bird, that resting in a midway land,
> Loves that, but better loves the home beyond."

We wish to see the Valley of Azun, which extends from Argeles, in a westerly direction, towards the mountains, near the Eaux Bonnes. There is a horse-road over them to that place, and we had some intention of trying it, but we have heard such a variety of accounts about the length and difficulties of the expedition, that we were much puzzled. The guide here maintains it is about nine hours' work on horseback, and part of the road so steep, on the other side, that one must dismount. This sounds too much for me, which I regret, as it would have saved us a journey of eleven miriametres, all the way round by Pau.

We now think of a drive in the carriage to Pierrefitte, having horses, and Baran, the guide, to meet us there; then go up the Vallée d'Azun, so far as Arens and the Chapelle de Pouy, and join the carriage at Argeles, to take us to sleep at Lourdes. We had afterwards a conference with Baran, to put things provisionally en train.

## CHAPTER IX.

Ride by St. Savin to the Valley d'Azun—Anzizans—Arens—Pouy la Hunt—Return to Argeles.

*Argeles, Tuesday, August 17th.*—The heavens smiled upon us this morning. I was up at half-past four. Baran called. We decided on the expedition, and, after the usual preparations, (Baran having started at half-past five, with the horses,) at seven o'clock we left our attentive hostess, Madame Daly.

The road is so cleverly managed, that even the "limaçon" did not alarm me. When we got to the new part, near Pierrefitte, opened last year, we walked down the old road, by which, I think, one has a finer view of the deep, rich gorge, and of the striking position of the castle; and there is, too, the additional pleasure of admiring the boldness of the new road. We found Baran in readi-

ness, and, at twenty minutes after eight—I, mounted on a nice little mare, with Baran in attendance at my bridle, and W—— riding by my side—we started for the Vallée d'Azun.

A beautiful path, shaded with well-grown walnut and chesnut trees, brought us to the Chapelle de la Piété, whose position on a mound, jutting into the valley, is peculiarly well calculated for a view, and it certainly enjoys one of the most exquisite imaginable. The beautiful Valley of Argeles is seen in its entire extent, with its wooded extremity branching off into the gorges of Luz and Cauterets : the snowy heights terminate the valleys, and the fine points of Levis and Sholas, are seen to great advantage, bounding, apparently, the valley leading towards Campan. St. Savin, with its striking church, is a most interesting object in the view, and highly picturesque.

We passed through St. Savin, and under the same rich shading of chesnuts, reached Anzizans, the most beautiful spot I ever saw. Indeed, the whole of our ride between St. Savin and Anzizans, was through a scene of soft enchantment, impossible to describe—a fairy land of beauty. Happy-looking villages, or rather

rows of a sort of feudal farm-houses, (not cottages, for none were small, or appeared to contain poor people,) with richly-carved door-ways and window-frames; each standing in a vine-trelliced garden, or orchard. Indian corn was drying before the doors, and large purple grapes clustering over them; and as our cavalcade passed by, numerous pretty faces came to the windows, and old women, in their scarlet jackets and blue petticoats, looked down from the projecting balconies, where they sat spinning in the sunshine.

Certainly I never moved for two hours through a succession of such lovely and varied scenes—sloping lawns, with splendid trees that would have made one imagine it was an old English park, if the silvery summits of snow-mountains had not appeared between the wide-spreading branches of oak and chesnut. There is an old ruined castle at Anzizans, situated on a wooded height above the village, and with it is connected a romantic story which I will relate at the end of our expedition.

We continued to enjoy fine scenery, by a tolerable road, as far as the Village of Sirsix. From it we had a sharp descent, by a rough

path, to reach a bridge which crosses the stream coming from the Valley of Bune. The good road may be accounted for, as I see, by the map, there is, by the Valley of Bune, a passage into Spain.

We had now the Pic d'Arens before us—very fine, as seen from hence. It is very sharp-pointed, perfectly devoid of vegetation, its only partial covering being patches of snow. Having passed through Bune, we crossed the Gave d'Azun by a bridge, and then entered its fine valley, which ranks very high amongst the beauties of the Pyrenees. It is, generally speaking, flat, rich, and highly cultivated through its whole extent, and can boast some magnificent heights; the Pic de Pares, the Port d'Arens, with its three curious tusks, and the Pic d'Arens, are as fine as any valley in the Pyrenees can boast of.

At the Village of Aucun, we joined the Argeles road, then reached Marsons, and, from it to Arens, passed through the loveliest part of the valley; this is a frequented pass into Spain, practicable for horses, but very steep. The ride from Aucun was one of twenty minutes, but hours might be lingered through it most agreeably. We rode on to the Chapelle de Nôtre

Dame de Pouy la Hunt, well placed on a high projecting mound at the mouth of the gorge leading to Spain, in a position to answer the double purpose of church and fortress. It took us nearly four hours of leisurely riding to reach this place, and here, having sent back the guide and horses to feed at Arens, we remained to enjoy the beauties around us.

The chapel itself is now held in great veneration, and, on the 15th of this month, the multitude of visitors was very great; but this was not always so. During the Revolution, it was occupied as a military post; and our poor guide shewed us the débris of broken ornaments in the sacristy, and the burnt sides of the confessionals, against which candles had been stuck, as proofs of the degradation it had suffered. He said this took place at the revolution of 1815: he must have been mistaken, but his imperfect French did not allow me to clear up the point.

The style of building and decoration resembles the Spanish churches; the roof is groined, painted blue, and ornamented with stars. The altar, which occupies the entire of the eastern extremity, is rich and gorgeous, with gilding, twisted pillars, &c. One of the niches is occu-

pied by a figure of the Virgin, dressed in pink muslin—a strong likeness of an old friend of ours. The four confessionals and pulpit are also gilt, and in better taste; the floor is the solid and bare rock.

The view is beautiful; an hour soon passed away in its enjoyment, and we sat under the shade of a tree below the church, and refreshed ourselves with an excellent cold chicken, which our worthy guide had the precaution to bring. From this place, there is a fine passage to the Eaux Bonnes, by the Col de Tourtas. Our informant represented it as very interesting, that at a slow rate of going, it would occupy five hours; but that the road is good for horses the greater part of the way.

After we came down from the chapel, I took a view of it, and the picturesque bridge on the way to Spain. From the height beyond the bridge is a fine view down the valley, and up the richly-wooded gorge, which looks very tempting. On reaching Arens, we found a party just arrived in a carriage from Cauterets, by the only practicable route—that of Argeles; and on riding afterwards over the road they had travelled, we did not envy them their trip.

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Sketched by Lady Chatterton and drawn on stone by Bichebois.

NOTRE-DAME DE POUY LA HUNT IN THE VALLEY OF AZUN.

After a little delay, to allow Baran to pack up an acquisition of minerals he had made, we put ourselves en route, at ten minutes after two. At "*Aucun Village*"—a fine punning subject, much to M. Baran's delight,—we took the road to Argeles, and kept along the left bank of the Gave. We met other parties (riders) going up; but they were too late; the beauty of the day was gone, as clouds had gathered over the great heights. We were, though rejoicing in the recollection of what we had seen, also sufferers, being deprived of the pleasure of again seeing and renewing our acquaintance with Mont Né, which is seen from the road to Argeles.

The observation that, in descending, the valleys lose much of their interest, is applicable to this also, but, I think, in a minor degree than to others we had seen. The Valley of Azun continues full of beauty; near Arras it is particularly so; for above the village are the ruins of an old castle, finely situated, and, to judge from its style of architecture and ornament, of the same date as the church of St. Savin. At this village I got a glass of goat's milk, a most seasonable refreshment, and the readiness and good nature with which it was given was very gratify-

ing. We had now to make a considerable descent, by a road occasionally anything but agreeable for a carriage. Numbers of peasants were returning from the market of Argeles, one of the most important in the neighbourhood. It was too late to think of advancing to Lourdes, and indeed I was too much tired for any additional exertion; so we took up our old quarters at the Hôtel de Commerce, at Argeles—dirty, I must own, but having that great attraction to hungry travellers, a "bonne cuisine."

## CHAPTER X.

Tale of Nôtre Dame de la Pouy la Hunt, and of the Château d'Anzizâns.

THERE is no spot in the Pyrenees, nor perhaps in any part of the world, more lovely than the little village of Anzizans. Its old ruined castle is situated on a woody height, detached from the adjoining mountains, and commanding a view over the three beautiful valleys—those of Argeles, Pierrefitte, and Azun. It was, in old times, the principal fortress of the neighbourhood, from its commanding position, and in the reign of our third Edward, was bravely defended against a large Spanish force by the English Baron, Regnier d'Anzizans.

A story is told of this English Baron which interested me a good deal, connected as it is with the foundation of that old church we visited with so much pleasure, Notre Dame de Pouy la Hunt.

At that period there was a celebrated beauty, the daughter of the Comte de Foix, whose charms were so great that she turned the heads and troubled the hearts of half the knights in France. Being of a royal house, and a great heiress, Leonora's father was naturally rather fastidious in the choice of her husband, and the young lady herself had hitherto looked coldly upon all the suitors who thronged to the court of Foix. At last the English Baron Regnier d'Anzizans made his appearance at a tournament given at Foix, and a mutual passion was the result. This was not to be wondered at, for the handsome gallant knight vanquished every opponent, and himself became a victim to the charms of Leonora, from whose fair hand he received every prize.

But the old Count, her father, did not look kindly upon his suit, for he hated the English, and was jealous of the vast territories they then possessed in France; so Baron Regnier was dismissed, and, lest the young Leonora should persist in her sudden fancy, the Count immediately entered into a treaty of marriage for her with the Prince of Aragon. In vain she wept, and implored to be allowed to go into a convent rather than wed a man she hated. Her father

was inexorable: the Prince soon arrived at Foix, and an early period was fixed for the marriage.

Leonora had never seen him before, but as he was a very handsome as well as valiant prince, she seemed to be soon reconciled to her fate, and received his homage with apparent pleasure. But before she signed the contract which was to seal her fate for life, Leonora begged a favour of her father.

"I will consent," said she, with one of her most winning smiles, "to marry the man I dislike, provided you give my favourite attendant, Margaret of Pamiers, in marriage to the English noble who sued in vain for my hand. He made a deep impression on her heart during that fatal day," continued Leonora, with a sigh, "and since I cannot——"

"But how know you that he will consent?" interrupted the Count. "She is, indeed, of noble birth, but her dower is not considerable, and even my Leonora must confess she is much your inferior in beauty."

"Well," replied his daughter, "this may be the case; but still Margaret herself fancies Baron Regnier will gladly accede to the proposal; and I can only say, that, should he do so, I will no

longer oppose your wishes. Despatch a messenger without delay to the Castle of Anzizans; and if the reply be favourable, my dear Margaret shall be married the very same morning you have fixed for the celebration of my nuptials."

The Count de Foix, though much surprised, was delighted at his daughter's proposition, and immediately acceded to her wishes, though he scarcely hoped to obtain Baron Regnier's consent.

In four days the messenger returned, with a letter from the Baron, in which he declared his readiness to receive the fair Margaret's hand, and promised to appear on the day appointed to claim her as his bride. All was now bustle and preparation in the Château of Foix; that fortress, which still bears so many traces of its former magnificence, was then one of the proudest in southern France.*

Besides the numerous family of the bride, and the large retinue which had accompanied the Spanish Prince, the Count had invited all the principal nobility of the neighbourhood, and even many English knights from Bayonne and Bordeaux, to grace the ceremony with their presence.

* See a view of it, towards the end of the volume.

On the morning of the eventful day, Leonora and her friend Margaret were attired in splendid dresses, and though their birth and fortune were very different, yet, by Leonora's express wish, their costume was exactly alike.

Leonora first advanced to receive her father's blessing; and then giving her hand to the Prince of Aragon, she was led by him to the altar. She proceeded with a firm step, and as she passed near the English Baron, her look seemed to say, that if he had for a moment possessed her heart, she was now well pleased to wed a prince so much superior in rank, and nearly his equal in beauty and accomplishment.

Margaret of Pamiers, conducted by her mother, was then presented to her future lord. She trembled violently as the handsome English Baron took her hand, and he was obliged to support her to the altar, at which they all four knelt, and received the nuptial blessing from the venerable Bishop of Pamiers.

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The ceremony was ended. Nobles and courtly dames crowded forward to congratulate the

Prince and his bride. The English Baron, on the plea of having a long journey to perform that day, took leave immediately of his noble host, and, with his fair bride, departed from Foix. The two friends were in despair at parting. The Prince's bride was so overcome at taking leave of the dear companion of her youth, that she refused to appear at the banquet, and, under the plea of sudden indisposition, retired to her own room. The Prince was of course grieved to lose her company, but he was of a joyous disposition, and therefore participated cheerfully in the diversions and splendid fêtes of the day.

It was late when the banquet ended; and when the Prince of Aragon retired to rest, it was evident that he was under the influence of his father-in-law's good wine—a circumstance, however, which did not excite much attention in those days, when all were so addicted to the pleasures of the table.

The next morning, at an early hour, the Count of Foix was awakened from his slumbers by the loud and angry tones of the Prince of Aragon. His hitherto jolly and good-humoured countenance, wore an expression of fury and angry disappointment, for the first sun-beam that had

entered his bridal chamber, disclosed to his astonished gaze the dark complexion and haughty countenance of Margaret de Pamiers.

The Count of Foix was even still more furious at the deception that had been played upon them than the disappointed Prince. He summoned his vassals, and vowed he would never rest till he had taken fearful revenge on the base English noble.

Margaret threw herself at the feet of her enraged husband and injured lord, declaring that she had only practised the deceit to save Leonora's life, as that Princess had vowed to cast herself from the battlements of the highest tower rather than wed a man she could not love.

But Prince Louis of Aragon cast her from him with anger, and accompanied the Count, with a numerous retinue, to try and recover his promised wife.

A formidable army was soon raised, for most of the surrounding states hated the English, and though nominally at peace, were glad to seize on every opportunity of injuring them.

In the meantime, Baron Regnier and his bride, who had a day and a night's start of their pursuers, reached in safety the Castle of Anzizans.

Leonora was enchanted with her new residence, and with the success of a fraud which had secured to herself the lover of her choice, and to her ambitious friend the hand of a prince.

The next day, however, rumours reached them of the approach of hostile troops, and the English Baron prepared for defence. But Leonora evinced no fear.

"I will deal with them," said she, with a proud and somewhat malicious smile. "I have a spell which will soon turn their anger into kindness. I shall yet receive my father's blessing, and the Prince will thank me for giving him such a beautiful and loving wife as Margaret of Pamiers."

"How can that be accomplished?" inquired the Baron.

"By the same spell that enabled me to deceive my father and his whole court, and blind them all so effectually on our marriage-day."

What this spell was—whether the fair lady dealt in the occult sciences, or whether the only magic she used was the power of her charms, and a determined will,—is a mystery that was never cleared up. Certain it is, though the hostile troops exceeded tenfold those of the English

Knight, and though the Count de Foix and the Prince of Aragon declared, as they approached the castle, they would not leave one stone of it standing on another—yet, the moment Leonora appeared before the gates, all hostile feeling seemed dispelled. The old chronicles, moreover, state that the father and deceived lover entered the castle in perfect amity with its owner, and were entertained by the young pair "moult honorablement;" that Margaret, also, soon joined the happy party, and, after a visit of fifteen days, departed, in great state and splendour, with her royal husband, for Saragossa.

The Count of Foix often visited his daughter and her husband in their beautiful castle of Anzizans, and nothing could exceed the happiness they all enjoyed. So far, all is sunshine; but my tale is not yet ended. Sad trials still awaited the young pair.

After the birth of her second child, Leonora's health declined. Soon, she felt that she was dying; and full of deep affection for her husband, and anxiety for her children, she implored Regnier to promise that he would never give to them another mother. The Baron, whose affection for his wife bordered on adoration, swore, without a

moment's hesitation, a solemn oath that nothing should ever induce him to marry again, or love any other than herself; so the beautiful Baroness died in peace, and her disconsolate husband erected a splendid monument to her memory in the chapel of the castle. He was in utter despair; he gave up all society, every pursuit and amusement he had hitherto enjoyed, and passed most of his time in contemplating the marble effigy of his adored wife that was placed over her tomb, and was said to be a striking likeness. He seemed to have lost all interest for everything in the world, and could bear to see no one but his children. The eldest was about three years old, and the little fellow endeavoured, by every tender endearment, to win a smile from his poor father, but in vain.

As time passed, however, and years rolled on, the English Knight, who was by nature of a joyous and social spirit, began to enjoy the pleasures of the chase. Then he gradually mixed with the society of the neighbourhood, and joined in tournaments and festal meetings. At last, rumours were afloat that the fair daughter of Count Sainte Marie had won his heart. One evening, as he was returning late from the dwell-

ing of this fair damsel, and was passing near the spot where the chapel of Pouy la Hunt is now situated—and, perhaps, thinking rather more of her charms than his beautiful deceased wife,—his attention was arrested by a shadowy form that appeared amid the dark trees of the forest, while a strain of lovely music was heard. It was a woman's voice, but more harmonious than any he had ever heard,—yes, even than that of his lost Leonora, though she was celebrated for the sweetness of her voice and her musical powers. There was something so heavenly in the plaintive tones which now met his ear that he paused, and listened with rapture; he stirred not, lest he should disturb the blissful sound. At last it ceased; but the moon had risen above the snow-capped Vignemale, and its clear, bright beams shone through the trees, and illumined the form of a lovely woman.

She was sitting on the edge of that rock which now forms the foundation of the chapel at Pouy la Hunt, and did not appear to see the Baron, who was standing in the shade of a chesnut tree. Without waiting to consider the strange circumstance of a lady being alone at that hour, in such a lonely spot, he approached the fair being,

and with impassioned accents expressed the admiration she had inspired. The voice in which she answered him was even more touching than her song; and tradition says, that the Baron was so enchanted with the beautiful stranger, that before the sun rose next morning he had quite forgotten his oath to his deceased wife, and implored the mysterious lady to be his.

"I will consent," said she, "on one condition—it is, that you promise faithfully to make no inquiry about me; return home, and consider and examine your own feelings calmly; and if you should then remain in the same mind for one week, return to this spot at midnight and you will find me."

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One week!—a whole week! Never had time appeared so long to the Baron before. He utterly forgot the Lady of Sainte Marie, whose charms had certainly made a deep, but not lasting impression on his heart. He forgot everything but the lovely mysterious being of the glen, and counted the hours and moments till the expiration of the appointed time. He

had, indeed, returned there every day and night, and searched most diligently in all directions, but no lady, nor even any dwelling where she might have lived, could be seen.

During this tedious week, his little boy fell dangerously ill. The child said he had seen his dear mother in his sleep, and that she looked very unhappy.

"Take me to her," said the little fellow, weeping bitterly. "Let me go to that beautiful tomb, where she smiles on us every day. I want to see if that marble figure, which is all that remains to us of her, looks unhappy too. Pray take me, dear father, to her tomb!"

The Baron, who saw the child was in a high fever, urged him to remain quietly in bed.

"Why will you not take me there?" sobbed the poor child. "You used never to feel happy except when you were praying at her tomb, and now you hardly ever go there. Dear, dear father, take me, pray!"

The child was so eager to go, that his father, having endeavoured in vain to pacify him, took him in his arms, and carried him to the chapel.

A bright sun shone through the painted glass windows and illumined the lofty building, but

the northern transept, which contained the monument, was in shade.

" It is gone !" exclaimed the child, before they had reached that part; " My darling mother is not there !"—and the poor boy burst into tears. The Count hurried towards the monument, and there found, to his horror and surprise, that the statue had disappeared.

" Who has done this ?" inquired the Baron, of his astonished servants, who, on hearing the child's cries, had hastened to the spot.

No one could tell. The beautiful figure, as large as life, which had stood over the sarcophagus, was certainly gone, yet no marks could be discovered that shewed how it could have been taken away.

The terrified priest maintained that when he locked the door, the preceding night, all was safe, for the last thing he did was to trim a lamp which was always burning before the tomb, and he must have remarked if the statue had not been there.

Every one was questioned, and diligent search was made, but no tidings of the statue could be obtained. Little Regnier cried bitterly at the loss of his darling mother, as he called the

statue, and was very ill all the following night and day. The next evening was the one to which Baron Regnier had been looking forward with intense anxiety. He remained with his poor sick child till the last moment, for he loved the boy dearly, and beheld his sufferings with infinite sorrow; at last he tried softly to steal away.

"Do not leave me, dear father—pray, pray do not! I shall have a bad dream again if you go. You know I slept so much more happily last night, when you were near me, and I awoke so much better this morning. Do—do stay!"

The poor Baron was sadly embarrassed. His child's illness, and the mysterious disappearance of the statue, had touched him deeply, and by the boy's sick bed he had reflected on all his conduct since the death of his wife. He now remembered what were his former sentiments, and that—

"Love
Admits of no division of its worth:
We cannot set one gem in many rings."

He had twice nearly proved unfaithful to the solemn promise he had given Leonora on her death-bed. He had been foolishly attracted by the superficial qualities of the demoiselle de

Sainte Marie, who was certainly not the sort of person to prove a good mother for his darling children. But, then, the mysterious stranger! when he thought of her, all self-reproach was hushed. There seemed a magic spell in her image which effaced every other impression from his mind—the recollection of all his past life seemed to fade before that resplendent being. He seemed only to have lived that one night in the glen at Pouy la Hunt. He must return there—an irresistible impulse seemed to urge him; yet he felt it was strange that the boy should be so anxious for him not to go. At last, he tore himself away, and though the poor child uttered a piercing cry, which went to the father's heart, still he would not listen to its touching appeal. The Baron hurried from the castle, but that plaintive sound had left a mournful feeling in his heart: he felt oppressed with the conviction that some dreadful misfortune was about to occur. However, that passion which makes fathers forget their beloved offspring, and causes half the misfortunes in the world, impelled him forward, and at the appointed hour he reached the glen.

The fair being was already there, but I will

not relate the joy of the meeting. The Baron forgot wife, child, and everything, and swore to belong alone to the fascinating creature.

"But there is a fearful penalty," she said, on hearing his determination; "if you wed me, your eldest-born will die."

Regnier shuddered, but so powerful was his love, that he still persisted.

"It could not be," thought he. "No misfortune could possibly be connected with a being so lovely. Her presence must bring a blessing on the house where she dwelt." Thus reasoned the Baron, just as we all do when blinded by passion.

"Then to-morrow night I will come to the castle chapel. Ask no questions of me, but prepare everything for the marriage ceremony; and at midnight open the small door on the western turret, and I will be there."

Regnier again shuddered, for it was through that door his wife's corpse had been carried to the grave, and he had never unclosed it since that fatal night. Before daybreak, he returned home, and with extreme anxiety proceeded to his child's room.

"Oh, dearest father, I am so glad you are

come!" exclaimed the boy; "I thought I never should see you again. I have had such a dreadful night! I saw dear mamma again, and she looked still more miserable, and said that you had deserted her. Oh, I shall never be happy till her dear statue comes back again—do let me go and see whether it is there!"

The child was dangerously ill all day, but towards night he fell into a profound sleep, and the Baron hastened from his sick bed to have everything prepared for the ceremony. The chapel was splendidly illuminated and adorned with a profusion of the choicest flowers. But strange rumours were afloat in the castle, and some of the old servants shook their heads, and declared no good could come of such extraordinary doings; for they were all aware of the oath the Baron had sworn to his dying wife.

"Well, I never thought it would have come to this!" said the old seneschal. "Going to be married, indeed! and to whom, nobody knows. Well, I knew something dreadful would happen ever since our lady's figure disappeared."

Thus all the old servants murmured, and even the priest seemed almost unwilling to perform the marriage ceremony.

The Baron, however, disregarded all these unpleasant surmises, and anxiously waited till the hour of midnight.

"See, our lord!—he is going to that fatal door!" exclaimed the seneschal, as the Baron proceeded to open the western gate. But when they saw him return with the beautiful lady, all murmurs were hushed.

"Surely it is an angel!" they exclaimed. "Well, no wonder our master should forget his promise!"

The marriage rite was performed, and Regnier took the hand of his bride to lead her to the banqueting hall—it was icy cold. He looked at her, and was surprised to observe that her features seemed to alter—her countenance became deadly pale. The Baron shuddered, yet endeavoured to draw his trembling bride towards the door of the church, when suddenly the hand whose icy touch had made him tremble seemed to vanish—he feels nothing. He presses closer to the fair form, but it eludes his grasp. The more he endeavours to approach, the faster it recedes.

But what miracle is this? Those lovely features assume the likeness of his deceased wife! It is she!

"Yes, I am the spirit of your once-loved Leonora! Twice you have plighted your faith to me. Thank God I have saved you from perjury; and now, I trust, when we again meet, it will be at the throne of God. Weep not, dearest Regnier, but repent. Devote the remainder of your life to the service of God and welfare of your dear children; and as some atonement for the sin you have committed, cause a magnificent church to be erected to the Blessed Virgin, on the spot where you first saw my immortal spirit."

So saying, the figure slowly receded towards the tomb, when, to the astonishment of all, it vanished, and the lost statue was again seen in its original position. And it never disappeared again, for the Baron never again caused any disturbance to the spirit of his departed wife. He immediately erected a magnificent church at Pouy la Hunt, and endowed it with ample revenues.

The chapel at Anzizans, and indeed a great part of the castle, has been destroyed; but an old peasant told us that he remembers, when a boy, having seen the miraculous statue of Leonora, the very same, at Nôtre Dame de Pouy la Hunt, where, after the destruction of Anzizans, it was carried, and placed on the principal altar. There it performed almost as many cures and miracles

as the blessed St. Bertrand himself. "It was unfortunately broken in pieces," said the old man, "by the revolutionary troops; but one of the hands still remains entire, and is said to be so icy cold that no one can touch it."

"The hand, then," said I, "does not perform any cures?"

"Oh, no," said the old man, with a mournful shake of the head, "the wicked troops that broke the statue in pieces destroyed the virtue that used to give it such power. In my young days, we believed many good things, and when any one was ill or in trouble, they had only to make a pilgrimage to Nôtre Dame, when they were sure to find assistance. But, as I said before, the revolution spoilt all that, and we have nothing left now, and young people say it is foolish to believe in anything."

And the old man clasped his hands on the top of his staff, and turned away with a look of despondency that went to my heart. Poor man, he has lost his faith in the belief of his ancestors, and has not acquired any firm principles of a better creed. This is probably the case with millions! The old man, however, implicitly believed the tale I have related. He said that it all

happened in good old times, "before mankind had become so wicked, and therefore were under the protection of good spirits who came among us; now God has abandoned us, and his angels and saints appear to us no more!" He might have added, had he known Shakspeare and his friends, that—

"The time hath passed for godlike forms
To leave awhile their starry homes,
And throw 'mid human clouds and storms,
Elysian joy on mortal domes.
The time hath passed when Phœbus flung
His golden spells on laughing earth;
And every field and forest rung
With hymns of bliss and shouts of mirth.

"E'en Love hath folded up his wings,
And from his hand his bow hath cast;
Apollo's lyre hath lost its strings
Its tune hath fled—The Time hath passed!
Gone are the glorious visitants
Who gave this world so bright a grace,
And grief and care—a thousand wants,
And endless crimes, are in their place."

## CHAPTER XI.

Journey from Argeles by Lourdes and Pau to les Eaux Bonnes—Difficulty of finding accommodation—Excursion to the Eaux Chaudes—Gabas—Bious Artigues—Splendid scenery at the base of the Pic du Midi de Pau—Walk to the Montagne Vert.

*Wednesday*, 18*th*.—We had a beautiful morning for our departure from Argeles, and a fine view up its three-branch valleys, with their receding heights and snow mountains. It is, indeed, the most rich, varied, and extensive mountain and valley view I ever saw, and is like looking through three gigantic portals into the very heart of the Pyrenees; all we regretted was the rapidity with which our post-horses carried us through it. At the moment I gave it the preference to any valley I had seen, and I know not if, on reflection, I have altered my opinion.

The hill beyond Argeles, where we stopped to make my third sketch, is a noble point of view,

though the higher summits are no longer visible, yet there is a remarkable variety of outline, and the rich carpeting of Indian corn has its peculiar effect. But near the ruined castle of Bidalos the view is still finer; saw here again some of our now distant friends, the snow heights—the tour of Marboré, and perhaps the Vignemale. Then we had that lovely drive by Lourdes, with its fairy castle hanging high in air above the blue morning mists; and Estelles, with its interesting Betharam; and Coraze, with its dreams of Henri Quatre's young days; and afterwards Pau, shining in all the glory of a hot, mid-day sunshine, with its pretty peasant-girls selling fruit, and its lizards and butterflies basking in the warmth; and every one, rich and poor, looking kind, and happy, and luxurious.

On inquiry, we had found that though a cross-road exists from Lestelles to Loubie, it is not yet in order, so we were obliged to go round by Pau; there we remained for some little time, so as to allow of a visit to M. Lestapis, le Receveur-General, and got some money, which done, we started for les Eaux Bonnes.

Nothing interesting at first, except the distant but indistinct view of the Pic du Midi de Pau,

which for form is one of the most curious we have seen, and in height little inferior to his name-sake of Bigorre. At the little village of Savignac the view improved; we had ascended a considerable height, as our wretched horses, one of which fell en route, testified, and then a fine view of the valley d'Ossun opened on us. Arudy, a considerable village, lay below, and between us flowed the Gave d'Ossun; we had a long descent to the river, and then crossed it to reach the Post.

The drive up the valley is picturesque; but clouds prevented our seeing it to advantage; passed by villages on both sides of the stream, and reached Larruns by an excellent and almost flat road. Larruns is a poor-looking place. Beyond it, we passed a wooden bridge, over the bed of a torrent, now quite dry, but its extent shews what a violent occupant it sometimes has. Soon after, the roads to the Eaux Bonnes et Chaudes branch off; we took the left to reach the former place. Mr. T—— told me that the ascent was so gradual as to be scarcely perceptible! Where could his powers of perception have been? For the fact is, that though the road is excellent, and the ascent gradual,

yet it was most perceptible, not only to ourselves but our horses.

We attained a very great height, winding up a pretty valley, affording at one place a sight of a snow-sprinkled mountain. Our ascent did not even cease with our arrival aux Eaux Bonnes, for the little town is situated on a considerable slope; its street has but one side, that opposite the houses being occupied by a kind of garden—a decided advantage les Eaux Bonnes possess over the other watering-places we have seen.

We had much difficulty to find a lodging; the hotels we were recommended being all full. The place altogether looked unattractive, so, under the impression that our stay would be short, we decided on taking rooms at the Hotel de l'Europe, though they were both dear and dirty—sixteen francs a day. Here we had a scene; for when the landlord heard us direct our courier not to take off all the luggage, he regretted his first exertions to secure us, and sent his wife to say that unless we were to stay some time we could not have the rooms—and this, too, after the carriage was partly unloaded! We got into a rage, and an angry discussion ensued, but we kept possession.

Immediately after breakfast, on the following morning, we resolved to visit the Eaux Chaudes, to see what accommodation was attainable there. A donkey was secured for me, and W—— walked. We had been told that it would not take more than an hour to reach the Eaux Chaudes, but full two hours elapsed before we arrived, and they were two of the hottest I ever felt. We descended towards Larruns, and at a short distance from it, turning to the left, proceeded up a hill towards the pass called La Hourat, which forms the entrance to the gorge of the Eaux Chaudes. The ascent is very steep; towards the top the road, narrows where the solid rock has been cut, and rises in a perpendicular wall on either side, on emerging from which a striking scene meets the eye.

The pass is extremely narrow, and the sides, which are so steep as to be clothed with but a scanty vegetation, rise to a great height on either side, while deep, deep below, is heard the roar of the torrent in its very confined channel, whilst the eye can just distinguish the white foam of its agitated water.

This passage was opened by the Princess Catherine, sister to Henri Quatre; and on the left

hand, after passing through it, there is a small chapel, with an image of the Virgin and child, and an inscription commemorating the kindness of the princess, and another urging the traveller to offer up a prayer for defence against the dangers of the pass, and giving the form of the address.

I gladly took refuge from the scorching sun within its walls, and sat down to rest, and to think of that interesting Princess Catherine who had so often passed this spot. The shade and cool breeze were so delightful, that I thought of remaining there until W—— returned from a voyage of discovery to the Eaux Chaudes, but, after some rest, I resolved to encounter the oppressive heat, and off we started.

The valley is so narrow as to shut out a view of the great heights; but its boundaries are graceful and wild, being rocky, and well wooded.

The Eaux Chaudes is a dull-looking little place, with scanty accommodation, and that of an inferior description. We saw but one lodging which could have held us. This we engaged at twelve francs a-day. We were taking some coffee in one of its rooms, when Lord N—— came in and paid us a long visit. Dr. H—— called, and we walked with him; he spoke of a

striking proof of the efficacy of the waters in a case of rheumatism.

We afterwards called on Lady N——, whom we found at home, and were delighted to see. We heard that they are going to Pau on Tuesday; and as this dull little place would thus lose all its attraction for us, we gave up our lodgings, delighting our host with a present of five francs. A fine public bathing establishment is now being built here, which is to cost 300,000 francs. Our stupid old donkey-driver, not seeing us where he expected, concluded that we had left for Eaux Bonnes, and started off. We had to send after him—luckily, with success; but he had gone a long way, and whilst waiting, I attempted a sketch outside the town. It was near five when we left the Eaux Chaudes, therefore our journey home was cool and delightful. Lord N——, who had good-naturedly ridden after our donkey, accompanied us more than half way to the Eaux Bonnes, contributing not a little to the pleasure of the trip. The evening was cool, because the sun was off the valleys, so the fatigue was comparatively nothing, and we got home in an hour and a half.

The great business of the following day was to place ourselves in comfortable lodgings—

rather a difficult matter. The rooms, au Rez-de-Chaussée, at the Maison Cazeau, will not be vacant until Monday, but we saw some rooms au second, à l'Hôtel des Quatre Nations, which I think will do. Foreigners, when about to leave, are very good-natured in allowing the inspection of their apartments: the family of a French Marquis admitted us to see the rooms they occupied, in the midst of their packing; and a Frenchman, who was in possession of another which we wanted, was in the act of being shaved when we were ushered into the room by the master of the house. Seeing what was going forward, I naturally drew back; but the French gentleman was not the least annoyed at being thus interfered with, and, with the towel stuck under his chin, most gallantly took me by the hand, and insisted that I should see the rooms.

The result was, that we engaged five rooms, holding seven beds, for eleven francs a-day, a price which shews that no more visitors are expected. A traiteur has agreed to furnish dinners for ourselves and servants for ten francs a-day. At Cauterets we were far better and more abundantly supplied for eight francs. How

little is report to be depended on! The Eaux Bonnes is usually extolled for cheapness, and for the excellency of its hotels; we have found them, in both respects, inferior to all that we have met with, except Luchon.

The weather changed this evening; we had heavy rain, accompanied with fog, thunder, and lightning during the night. Our host of l'Europe sent a message of reconciliation, and wanted to give us rooms at a reduced rate; but his repentance came too late—we had engaged the other rooms, and thus had a safe opportunity of lecturing him upon the sad consequences of extortion.

The Promenade de Grammont is beautiful. The woods where it is situated were cut down some years ago; but, fortunately, several old beech trees—most of them ancient pollards—have been left, and have now assumed fantastic and very picturesque forms. Of these, advantage has been taken in forming the walks. Seats are placed under some, and the path has been made to turn near others, so that their beauty is thus brought into play. The rest is hardly more than underwood, yet, mixed as it is with box—which grows in great abun-

dance — heath, fern, and a variety of beautiful wild flowers, it forms a most agreeable walk. The Pavilion, on a wooded isolated rock above the town, is a pleasant lounge, and commands a complete view of the village and the valley, with Larruns in the distance below.

We had arranged, with the renowned Esterle, the guide par excellence, a visit to Gabas this morning. Our plan is, to drive there and have a horse for me for a further advance to la Case de Broussette, so as to enjoy a view of the Pic du Midi de Pau. We engaged a carriage conditionally—if the day be fine; a condition which the weather did not realize. We were up at a little after five. Heavy fog. Esterle came about seven, and, on his announcing " que le tems n'est pas joli," the expedition was postponed. Fortunately, I had a conversation with our host, M. Tourney, about our expedition to Gabas, and he advised us, instead of going to the Case de Broussette, to turn to the right on leaving Gabas, and proceed to a valley at the foot of the Pic du Midi. To this advice we are indebted for one of the most interesting views we have enjoyed—inferior only to that of Gavarnie and the Port de Venasque.

On Thursday evening, there was a conjuror's exhibition. We mistook the hour, and had taken a long and very agreeable walk on the Promenade de Grammont. I came home rather tired, and, having had no time to rest, gave up the conjuror. He shewed some good tricks; but the novelty to W—— was the management of some birds, which were trained to lie as if dead, to place themselves as if prepared for roasting, to fire a little cannon, &c. He saw Esterle at the exhibition, who cannot accompany us to Gabas to-morrow, being engaged to go with a party to Cauterets; he, however, undertook to procure for us a good guide, a saddle-horse, and carriage. W—— was up at five on Friday morning, and on looking out of the window, saw our new guide, Hurcade—horse, carriage, and weather being all in order.

At half-past seven, we drove from the door, and in an hour reached les Eaux Chaudes, as we had already overtaken our guide and horse, we drove through without stopping. Soon after leaving it, we reached the Pont d'Enfer, and saw the Cascade Goust, of which there is a lithograph by Carpenter, in Moreau's Guide. We heard a most exaggerated account

of the terrors of this road. It is excellent; and though generally without any protection, yet the road itself is so wide and good that it gives even in the descent very little feeling of danger.

The lofty boundaries of the valley beyond the Eaux Chaudes, both in wood, form, and colour, are very fine. The summit at one place is a perpendicular wall of rock; the colour of which, a reddish white tint stained with black, gives it the appearance of a work of art. It has the same resemblance to marble as Gavarnie. As we advanced, continually though gradually ascending, we saw below us the remains of a foundry, and apparently good roads leading into the other valleys.

All these valleys and heights are covered with wood; and to a great extent, including the valleys of Gabas and Bious, supplied, for a long period, the French navy with masts. Sometimes, to get down one single mast, the destruction of minor trees, to make a bed for its descent &c., was enormous, and thus the forests greatly suffered, but now they are again shewing some fine timber; and one of the peculiar features of the scenery here is the superior size of the wood.

Some noble old fir trees, in different stages of age and decrepitude, are still standing, giving great additional interest to the valley we ascended after leaving Gabas.

We reached Gabas in two hours and a half; here we left the carriage, and started for Bious Artigues, on horseback—Hurcade and W—— on foot. Following the advice of M. Tourney, we turned to the right, and thus quitted the road leading to Spain: better, from what I heard, than the one we took, but far less interesting. The Gave de Broussette and the Gave de Bious unite at Gabas, and form its Gave, to change its name to d'Ossun, when it unites with the Valentin near Larruns.

We ascended by the right bank of the Bious, through a fine and picturesque forest, the Gave having worked for itself a wild bed at an immense depth below, of which the occasional glimpses we caught were very fine. Several old firs occur, perfectly decayed, but yet standing—many with shivered tops, whilst the lower parts shewed no symptoms of decline. These remains of the original inhabitants of the forest were very striking, giving the impression that man had never been in these retired fastnesses to disturb them.

We overtook a flock of sheep, driven by a fine specimen of a mountain shepherd. A handsome woman, occupied—as all the women are—with the distaff; a donkey carrying a few necessaries, the essential copper vessel for making cheese, and a wooden instrument which appeared a kind of presser, a few goats, and the indispensable large dog, formed, with the shepherd and his flock, the party, who were moving to another pasturage up the mountains.

After a ride of about twenty minutes, we exchanged our rough road for a steep and rocky path, which brought us to a plateau covered with turf, and comparatively level. From this, another steep and rocky ascent, and then another plateau of greater size, affording good pasturage. A zig-zag path, at the upper end, gave us a view down the gorge we had left, and shewed us what a height we had attained. We now reached a wood, by a narrow path, cut in a steep slope, rather a nervous one, so I dismounted, and soon after turning to the right, we reached the Plateau of Bious Artigues; and what a magnificent view opened upon us!

The Pic du Midi d'Ossun, or Pau, in point of height, is much inferior to several of the Py-

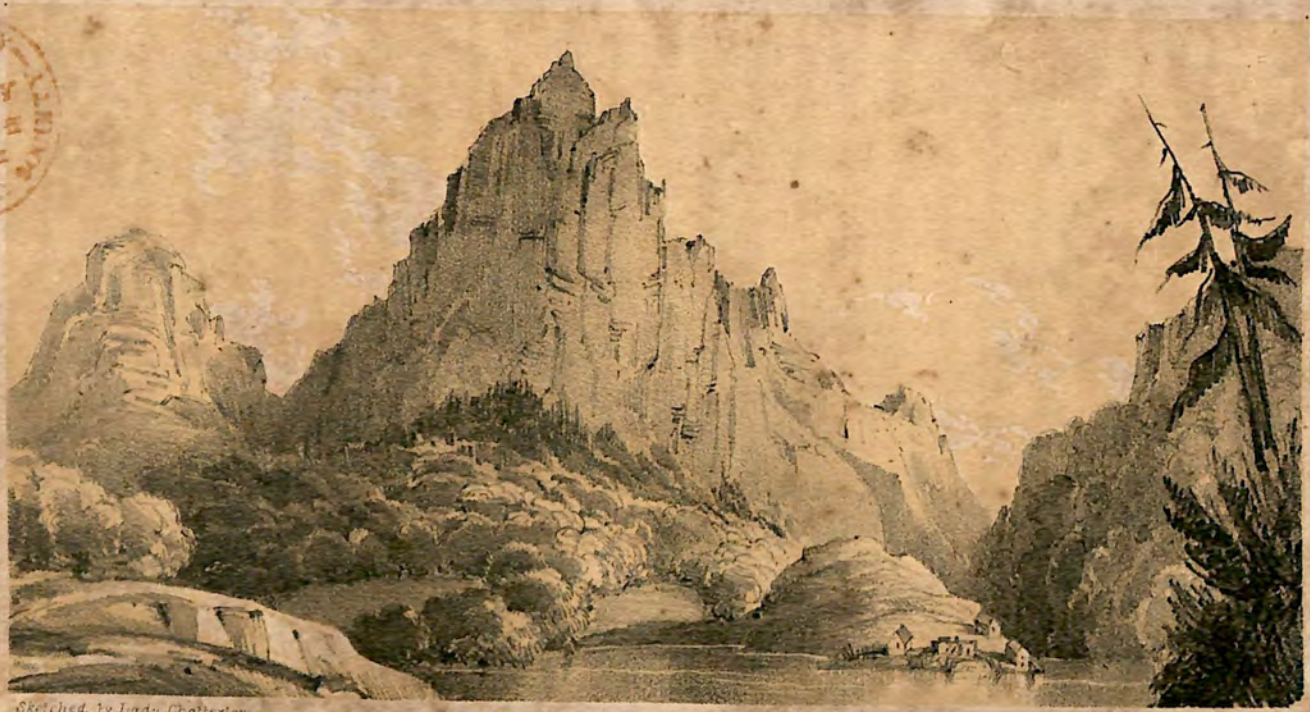
renees. M. Moreau gives it an elevation of 1496 toises, or, I believe, about 9673 English feet. Inglis gives the Pic du Midi de Bigorre 9721 feet; but as he has copied this from some French work, probably the feet given would be French. In that case, it would be 1628 toises, or, in English feet, 10,469. Inglis gives the height of ten Pyrenean mountains, and the Pic du Midi de Pau is the lowest; but though the noble height now immediately before us is thus inferior in height, in grandeur of effect it exceeds any I have ever seen.

It rises majestically from the little plain of La Ressec, and no intervening height occurs to diminish the effect. The Maledetta, seen from the Port de Venasque, is not by any means so striking, as the surrounding mountains are apparently so nearly of the same height. This circular plain of La Ressec is exceedingly beautiful: it is the arena of a noble amphitheatre. We descended from the Plateau to it, that we might enjoy the effect more completely; noble heights, generally covered with fine timber, seem to surround it so perfectly that no outlet is visible, the solitary saw-mill being the only indication of the presence of man. The lower part

of the Pic is covered with a full-grown forest, and some straggling firs extend high up towards the rocky region; then the bare rock starts upwards in all its superiority, and seems, at this distance, so perpendicular as to defy all attempts at ascension; but, though difficult, it is far from impracticable. Its fantastic and peculiar shape gives it a character distinct from any other.

The day was perfect—not a cloud; and yet the air was fresh and not oppressively hot: we enjoyed it completely. I made the annexed sketch, which gives, however, but a very faint idea of the loveliness of the scene.

Fancy the most extensive and beautiful English park you ever saw, with all its forest glades, deep sylvan glens, green hills and valleys—its noble river, now gliding in calm majesty along a cheerful plain, kissed by the wide-spreading branches of oaks and beeches coeval with the Conquest, and now reflecting the rocky banks, and thus redoubling the scene of beauty,—fancy all this, with the addition of wild flowers more various and lovely than any English conservatory can produce, while large butterflies and graceful lizards bask in all the luxuriance of southern



Sketched by Lady Chatterton.

G. Rowe Lith. Cheltenham

PIC DU MIDI DE PAU from BIOS ARTIGUES

sunshine. Imagine all this, at the foot of a mountain the most beautiful and fantastic of all the Pyrenean giants. But "mountain" is far too vague and common-place a term for such an object; it looks like the commencement of some giant fabric, some mighty pillar intended to reach heaven. Description, however, is useless; but I think it would be worth while to come all the way from England solely for the purpose of standing half an hour on the Plateau of Bious Artigues. And such a lovely day as we had!—the air was so fresh and invigorating, the whole face of nature sparkled, and everything seemed to dance and sport with delight, as if the tears which nature shed during the last few days were turned to smiles of joy, and, as on the cheek and eye of beauty, only tended to heighten the charm.

Another great attraction of Bious Artigues, for me is, that it is not a valley; and in these Pyrenees one never seems able to get rid of valleys. In general, there is nothing intermediate between a mountain top—a real pic, on which there is hardly room to stand comfortably,—and a deep, narrow valley, where one feels it impossible

ever to get out, and a perfect miracle how one ever got in. These valleys are beautiful; but I am tired of them, and therefore doubly enjoyed that lovely plain. It put me in mind of Mrs. Hemans' description of a Spanish scene:—

"I made a mountain brook my guide,
Through a wild Spanish glen,
And wander'd on its grassy side,
Far from the homes of men.

"It lured me with a singing tone,
And many a sunny glance,
To a green spot of beauty lone—
A haunt for old Romance.

"A dim and deeply-bosom'd grove
Of many an aged tree,
Such as the shadowy violets love,
The fawn, and forest bee.

"The darkness of the chesnut bough,
There on the waters lay,
The bright stream reverently below
Check'd its exulting play."

The extensive forests belong to the Commune of Larruns, and are carefully attended to. At the mill, the timber is sawed into planks; when done, women transport them on their heads to the road near Gabas, and receive only six

sous for carrying three large planks down the long and rough road we passed.

We remained at the Plateau for more than an hour, and then left it with regret; by this is a route into Spain, and consequently into the Vallée d'Aspe, which sounds very attractive. By ascending the Col des Moincs, a lake is reached, whose waters flow by the river Aragon into Spain; and Moreau says, from a height near it the plains watered by the Ebro may be seen. We now retraced our steps, but as, owing to the steepness of the road, I walked a considerable way, we were rather longer in our descent than our ascent. We reached Gabas in an hour and twenty minutes, where we got into the carriage, and started for Les Eaux Chaudes. From the fine oak tree near the road, about half an hour from Gabas, we again enjoyed the beautiful prospect which we admired so much on approaching. Here is a fine view of the Pic du Midi—indeed the only one that occurs on the whole road. It is likewise invisible on the other road, so far as the Case de Broussette, and is not seen till after a ride of nearly two hours further, so that to see the pic to advantage no course remains but that which we followed.

As we drove home we again admired the very fine trees which fill the deep ravine in which the Gave flows. We reached the Eaux Chaudes in an hour, but were an hour and half going to the Eaux Bonnes, which shews how much more fatiguing for horses is the long and gradual pull up to the Eaux Bonnes, than the short and steep ascent to the rocky gateway on the road to the Eaux Chaudes. We returned delighted with our excursion—a feeling which remained even in spite of the wretched dinner M. Barthe had provided for us.

*Saturday.*—This lovely day tempted us to walk to the top of the Montagne Verte. We at first followed the road to the village d'Aas, and, near it, had a fine view of the village and valley. We left the road afterwards, and scrambled up the mountain; I know not if much time was gained by this manœuvre; one thing is certain, that by it I made a hot walk much hotter. The air on the summit was delightful, and we remained for an hour talking to some peasants who were on the top. The view of the plain is not good; but that of the Pic de Ger and its associates very fine, as well as that of the entire range towards

the Eaux Chaudes, and the lofty boundary of the Valley of Larruns. One of the distant heights, part of the great chain, is of a very fantastic form—its name I could not discover.

## CHAPTER XII.

Pleasant scenery and walks at les Eaux Bonnes—French savoir-vivre—Promenade Jaquetninot—Ascent of the Pic de Ger.

*Wednesday.*—Still at the Eaux Bonnes: I have grown to like this place better than any of the Pyrenean bathing places we have been at; yes, better even than Cauterets, and, strange to say, I believe the reason is, because it has far less of the beautiful character of Pyrenean scenery. It is less grand and sublime, but more quiet and common-place, and reminds me a little of Matlock, and many other pretty varied, wooded, tumbled-about hill and valley scenes which I have often luxuriated in, and learnt to love.

When we feel ill it is delightful to fall upon some common-place "freundliches" spot, after a long gazing and straining at the sublime. By

straining, I mean mounting and scrambling about, till every bone seems jarred out of its place.

Not that the scenery of this spot is very quiet or tame—indeed, it may appear quite the reverse to those who begin their tour among the Pyrenees at the Eaux Bonnes—which is the best plan. It would then appear very grand; but after the giant heights of the Maledetta, Port de Venasque, and the wild valleys near Luchon and Gavarnie, this dwindles into a parallel with homely and loved scenes :—

> "I come
> To this sweet place for quiet. Every tree,
> And bush, and fragrant flower, and hilly path,
> And thymy mound, that flings unto the winds
> Its morning incense, is my friend."

Fine scenery ought to have such a beneficial effect on the mind as to embue it with kindly and benevolent feelings. I fear it has done so very little with me—and yet I have seen much of Nature's loveliness, and felt it most deeply too!

The near walks here are so delightful that I am less tempted than in other places to make long expeditions. Here is shade and variety for every hour, even the mid-day sun does not pene-

trate to the walks which overhang the series of cascades up the glen of Valentin, leading towards Torlas.

I think the old description of an English summer—"three days fine and then a storm"—might be very well applied to this climate; only during the first part of our visit to the Hautes Pyrenees, it might be reversed into "three days storm, and then one fine one."

The costumes are beautiful. In these parts, the people look good and happy, and much more intelligent than in the valleys of Luchon, Luz, &c. Here, too, are many pretty girls. At Luchon, I never saw anything in the shape of a young girl; there, the whole population seemed to pass from a miserable, puny childhood, to a goitred and shrivelled old age. Oh, those goîtres, how uncomfortable they looked!—what a sad pain in the throat they used to give me!

*Tuesday*, 24*th*.—Still stormy weather. Vivid lightning each night, and the swollen torrents, rushing down through this little ravine, make a roar, which, united with thunder growling in the mountains, does not at night improve my repose.

*Monday*, 30*th*.—Started at seven on a donkey,

and went up to the top of Jaqueminot. We had shade—the thick cool shade of large oaks and beeches—till near the top, and then the more chequered, but fragrant and delicious, shelter of pines. The air was cool at the summit, and we sat down for some time to enjoy the fine and extensive view of the Valley D'Ossun, &c. I distinguished Pau, and several villages near it, until the eye was lost in the blue distance far beyond. Thus I have discovered an additional charm of this place, that an hour and a half's ride leads one up to a spot from whence the eye enjoys a glorious outlet—a wide, extended view, over a mountainless country—a spot which has the additional advantage of a comfortable-looking road winding all the way towards it. I never felt, before our visit to the Pyrenees, the truth of what Hazlitt says about his inability to imagine any scene different from the one in which he is actually placed.

I have been sometimes, particularly at Luchon, so possessed by mountains, so imbued with torrents and precipices, that I began to doubt whether the world was composed of anything else, and imagined that my former plain and level life had been only a happy dream.

The society here is very pleasant; we have met several French families, who are extremely agreeable, and disposed to be very sociable. With all our boasted common sense and steadiness, the English shew less tact in adapting themselves to the peculiar circumstances of their position than the French, who, however volatile they may be, have much *savoir-vivre*, which after all is true wisdom. They do not perpetually want to be where they are not, and what they are not, but are satisfied, or appear to be so, with their age and their position. Hence it is, that there is less striving to belong to a particular set in society, and that elderly women are satisfied to go about with their own grey hair, and enjoy the true pleasures of age. While young girls are satisfied to be young girls, and seem less in a hurry to exchange their simple, almost childlike attire, and little homely pleasures, for the uncertain joys and greater honours of a married life. In all ranks here it is the same; a peasant is contented to be a peasant, and to dress like one—a servant, like a servant; whereas in England, on the contrary, each person strives to appear of a rank to which he does not belong.

We have no term in English equivalent to

*savoir-vivre*, yet how much does it express—a whole life of happiness and sociability. The English should sometimes reflect on this, for they have no natural *savoir-vivre*. We do not instinctively seize upon and pursue the manner of life most calculated to make ourselves, or those about us, happy.

The French certainly possess far more than we do the valuable art of knowing how to enjoy themselves, and one meets with much fewer dull people than in England. There is less of that flatness and pretension, which often render country neighbours so disagreeable to each other in our dear land. How amusing is the chance mixture of different elements of society sometimes to be met with in country places! A well-meaning, kind-hearted, regular country pair, with two blooming daughters, come to dinner at a neighbour's house, where a party of what are called fine London people is assembled. The country pair, strong and rigid in the consciousness of sterling worth, come ready prepared for resistance, and to be, as they expect, looked down upon by the grandees. This feeling fills them with restraint, and diminishes even those small powers of conversation or agreeableness which a

retired life and want of habit of the world have enabled them to acquire. They answer with cold disdain, or sharp brevity, the civil advances which those who are accustomed to much society are sure to make. The well-bred wit, or celebrated beauty, again, attempts to converse, but the country neighbour foolishly will not unbend, and looks graver and duller than ever.

Thus the impediment to sociability is often on the country neighbour's side, and produces much of that apparent pride, or finery, of which they complain. These good and well-meaning people make no endeavour to amuse, or to exert those conscientious feelings of real benevolence and kindness on which they pique themselves. Besides, a petted beauty or successful man of the world expects to have something done for their amusement, and cannot help despising those who only stare with awe, and have not penetration enough to discover that a person who has received great admiration, or has become celebrated in the world, must have some good qualities, and is likely to possess an unprejudiced and expansive spirit, which, when met with unpretending kindness, easily makes allowance for any deficiencies in persons who have not possessed the advantage

of much intercourse with the world. Both parties, then, get sulky, and, for the time, each really becomes what his antagonist supposes—the man of the world fine and exclusive, and the country neighbour stupid and stiff.

*Saturday.* W—— intended to have ascended the Pic de Ger this morning, but Esterle the guide proved false; he was to have returned last night, so as to start with him, but he has not appeared. As the weather looks likely to continue fine, W—— determined to wait for him another day, and we decided on another excursion, this morning, to the Promenade Jaqueminot.

The weather was delightful. We had ordered the donkey for half-past seven; but some delay occurred in changing the saddle for a fauteuil. We had shade almost the entire way, which was fortunate, for the ascent is steep, and the road, in some places, out of order. We kept continually in the forest, having occasional views of the Pic de Ger, and admiring the fine old beeches which are so strikingly ornamental. We thus, after an ascent of nearly an hour and a half, reached the turf, near which is a very extended view over the plain.

The road, properly so called, here ceases; we

exchanged it for a path which conducts for some time through a forest of fine old firs.

The ascent now became more rough and steep, with less of shade. We continued for about a quarter of an hour in the forest, where occur some fine specimens of ruined firs which the charcoal makers are causing rapidly to disappear.

Having passed the forest, we reached the top of Mount Gourzi, by a steep pasture; and enjoyed the view from the summit. The Pic de Ger shews very finely, and on a clear day, which this is not, the view must extend far beyond Pau. By this, is the mountain road to the Eaux Chaudes. We had a prosperous descent, and reached home before twelve, having found it, out of the shade, very hot. We intended a visit this evening to the celebrated botanist, GastonLacaze, at Pages Beost, and had actually started; but on reaching the other side of the bridge, though past five, we found the sun was still very hot; so that, with to-morrow's expedition in view, we gave it up, and returned home.

We heard of Esterle on our return, and he afterwards called on W——, and then said he could not accompany him to the Pic de Ger, as he had some patients " à frictionner," who had been waiting

most impatiently during his absence, and to them he must devote the entire day—so this favourite remède of Dr. Darralde's turns out an unlucky one for W——, and obliges him to be satisfied with Esterle's nephew—a great annoyance after the delay. W—— arranged to start at four o'clock, and, as a preparation, went to bed before nine.

I now give W.'s account of the expedition :—

"I was up at half-past two to look out; the weather looked delightful. I could not sleep again, so I commenced my preparations. Whilst heating my coffee in our Etna,* some of the coffee boiled over into the spirits of wine, which was thus sent over the table-cloth; I had much difficulty to extinguish the flames, as my mouth was at the moment fully occupied with bread and butter; however, I at last succeeded, and got off for the fright. My guide kept me waiting a little, so that I did not start until half-past four. The valley we entered immediately on leaving the town was still in deep gloom, and there was something awful in its darkness and silence as we ascended the rugged path. In fifty-

* A most useful little travelling companion for heating liquids, sold by Jones, 201, Strand.

five minutes we reached some snow, and in about half-an-hour afterwards arrived at what may be termed the first stage of our expedition —the Fontaine de Gesque.

"We were now about to leave the Valley of Lacoume, or rather the ravine so called, for the sides rise very abruptly from the torrent. The water here is very good; it trickles over the rock, and is received into a wooden trough, placed here for the convenience of all animals. We had been hitherto in a beech wood, mixed with box. After leaving the fountain we passed through a bare slope, and thus reached a bridge of snow, which we crossed, and then ascended on the other side; turning to the right, through a fine fir forest, growing some noble trees; the great and precipitous rocks, the Lasquindetes, were above us.

"We passed the grottoes hollowed out at their base, and soon reached the position for izard shooting. The proximity of the rock makes this a good post; for the game, when prevented from passing by the pic, must here come within shot, as the intermediate rock is too high and perpendicular to allow them to pass.

"Beyond this, occurs what the guide termed a 'bien mauvais pas,' and so I thought it; but

in returning, compared with what I encountered in the interval, it did not appear so bad. It consists in the doubling a sharp ridge of the Lasquindetes, which projects over the valley; the path is over inequalities on the face of the rock, and the passage is a nervous business. We had now left the Sapins; the line of the Lasquindetes receded, and we advanced up a steep turf, occasionally covered with debris. My espartillos, the kind of sandal worn by the peasantry, and which are so excellent for climbing rocks, are not so good on the slippery grass, as I found, unluckily to my cost, on our return. The crenallated and almost perpendicular Lasquindetes formed a huge line of fortification on the left.

"At seven, we reached the Cabane de Ger, a low mountain gîte for the shepherd of these lonely pastures. It is composed entirely of stones: but even here things are progressing, for a hut of a better description is being built near it, which will boast some timber in its roof. The Cabane is now deserted, the shepherd being in another part of the mountain.

"We continued our heavy pull up the turfy slope, alongside of a ravine, in which lay large

patches of snow. The Pic du Caperan, which means the Curé, being the breakfast station, was now the object to reach: it lay before us, and on our left, the apparently smooth Col de la Spada, an off-set from the Pic de Ger. Near the foot of the Caperan, is a curious hole, the upper part of which is circular, and resembles a well, and is of immense depth; a stone thrown in was heard bounding, from rock to rock, to a great distance below. Here is an excellent spring of water, though not in the abundance Moreau talks of, and as no water is to be had higher up, this is the usual breakfasting place. We made it ours, and passed half-an-hour most agreeably in the occupation.

"The scene was peculiarly grand—the great pic still towered above us; the bare rocks around shewed scarcely a trace of vegetation: naked and splintered, their bases covered with debris, they proclaim an acquaintance with the elements in their wildest form. The venerable Curé (Caperan) rises in the midst of this grand scene of desolation—what a congregation is his! On resuming our march, the next object was to reach the summit of the Caperan—a short, but fatiguing affair. To effect this, we crossed a

deep bed of broken stone, which we exchanged for a rocky piece of turf, and in twenty-five minutes reached the summit of the Caperan, a grassy plateau, commanding a noble view of the Pic du Midi, &c. But I was now satisfied that I had no chance of seeing the plain—clouds were fast gathering all around.

"For some distance now the direction was over a tolerably level turf, then a gradual ascent, until we came to the foot of the Pic itself, then it became very steep and rocky along the edge of a precipice. When we stopped to breathe, my guide, to *amuse me*, detached with his stick a large block of stone; its weight set it in motion, and down it thundered, bounding from rock to rock. The effect was grand, but terrific; it was impossible not to shudder at the thought of what would be one's fate in case of accident. After it was out of sight, I heard it still crashing downwards; then it re-appeared hurrying along with increased rapidity at a great distance below. The guide afterwards detached two others, but the effect was not so good, for the stones were decayed, and were soon shivered to pieces.

"The summit of the pic has two heads: we were ascending the edge of the ravine which

separates them, and reached the top in forty-four minutes after leaving the summit of the Caperan, which now looked very humble at our feet, thus accomplishing the entire ascent in five hours. The two heads are close to each other, and very nearly of a height; the guide insisted that the one we stood upon is the higher, but though I cannot help thinking that the other has rather the advantage, yet I am not surprised that the guides should have voted the preference to this, for to reach the other, a dangerous and narrow ridge must be passed, and no object is attained by the exploit. A French chasseur, last year, was on it, when he missed a double shot at some izards, which passed close to him; but this is not to be wondered at, as his footing could not have been very steady. I remained nearly an hour on the top. The view is very fine; but, for me, it was confined to the mountains—the plain being in clouds. The noble Pic du Midi is the great object. The height, called, by the guide, Montaigne d'Artouste, but which, I should say, is the "Soubi" of the map, exhibits much snow: and is, according to the same authority, 163 metres higher than the Pic du Midi. I saw, in its wild valley below, the Lac d'Artouste, which

supplies les Eaux Bonnes with trout. The Pics de Soussi and la Sisette, which looked important from the Plateau du Caperan, were insignificant now, compared with the greater heights in view all around. My guide could not tell me the names of the distant mountains, except the Pic de Gavisan, which looks very lofty. Soubi lay due south, the Pic du Midi, south-west; the Col de Torte, north-east; near it, but beyond, is the Col d'Arbas. The view was not so extensive as that from Mount Né, but wilder, as I saw nothing but mountain tops.

"After much enjoyment from this magnificent sight, the increasing clouds warned us it was time to depart. There was not a breath of wind, and the thick white clouds, rising perpendicularly from the tops of the mountains, had a curious effect, as if caused by fires upon them. As we descended, we saw an izard perched on one of the heights over Gourzi, watching our movements. This, and an eagle, soaring above the pic, were the only animals we saw: I thought we should have fallen in with some 'perdrix blanches,' but was disappointed.

"The descent was comparatively easy: in an hour we reached our breakfasting post, at the foot of the Caperan.

"Here, whilst disposing of the remainder of our breakfast, we heard a report, which Esterle took for that of a gun. I thought it like thunder; but the appearance of the sky did not indicate a storm; however, a louder growl convinced us that we had no time to lose; so after a halt of twenty-four minutes, enjoying the *eau sucrée* from the cool, delicious spring, we started, with the hope of reaching la Cabane before the storm broke. As we proceeded, we had a magnificent clap of thunder, gloriously echoed from height to height. It was in this part of the descent, just as I thought all danger past, that my sandals, hitherto so serviceable, played me a *mauvais tour* on the turf: I slipped up, and coming with my hand to the ground, sprained it badly.

"The rain still kept off. We reached the Fontaine de Gesque in one hour, finished here our bottle of wine, and, after a few minutes' delay, started again. The fog became so very thick, that it was almost as dark as night, when we hurried on through the gloomy ravine of Lacoume. It now began to rain heavily, and we reached home with wet jackets, having accomplished the descent in three hours and a half, of which we halted about half-an-hour. I was amply repaid for my fatigue, which was not so

great as after the ascent of Mont Né, though this is much longer and more difficult."

In the evening the guide, Esterle, who is both a poet and musician, brought us a kind of lyre of his own making. It has four or five catgut strings, and, being tuned to a rude flageolet, the musician strikes it with a stick across the strings, keeping up thus an accompaniment to the flageolet, which he plays with the other hand. It is a wild and, though loud, not unpleasant music, in the skilful hands of my guide, who, during our walk this morning, amused me much with his singing. Whilst we were at dinner, some peasants reached the town with a donkey, covered with the skin of a bear they had shot to-day in the woods, near where we had been. The bear had killed eight or ten sheep during the night.

Thursday, a day of rest and arrangement for departure. After various changes, we decided on accepting an invitation we had received to visit a French family at their chateau, near Mauleon, in the Pays Basque, so we mean to leave this place, and proceed to Oleron to-morrow. A letter has just arrived from our kind friend at St. Sebastian, who very cautiously abstains

from any opinion as to the state of Spain, but he holds out no inducement to venture.

In the evening, the two Esterles came, the nephew bringing the copy of a song he had composed on M. Moreau—a very singular composition. From them we heard that the Pic de Ger can, to a certain distance, be approached on horseback by the Promenade Jaqueminot, &c., but it is two hours longer. Esterle said that he accompanied, this year, a lame young lady who mounted to the summit, having rode to the Gesque du Ger.

This morning we intended to have paid the celebrated botanist, Gaston Sacaze, a visit, and some friends were to have gone with us. Our donkey-driver saved us, much to his credit, a useless expedition, for he came to say that Gaston was at the Eaux Bonnes, which I found to be the case from Esterle, who said he was gone to Gabas with some "herboristes" from Pau, but that he would pay us a visit on his return.

This he did accordingly, and we found him a most interesting man, with a fine countenance, his eyes much resembling those of Mr. Webster, the American secretary. His knowledge of botany

appears to be great; he gave us the names of the plants we had collected, and conveyed his information in a very agreeable way. The remarkable thing about him is, that, with a knowledge of great extent, and abilities to understand anything, he is still a complete peasant, and a modest, unassuming man. It was his calling as a shepherd which first gave him a taste for botany—the wish to discover simples useful for cattle; and the same feeling animates him still. He is at present directing his attention to the cure of a disease now prevalent among the cattle, and similar to the one which was so general in England last year. He complained much of the carelessness of public officers on the subject.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Journey to Oleron and Tardets—Mauleon—Rural fête—Dance de Roland.

*Oleron, Friday, Sept.* 3.—*Hôtel Condesse.*—We intended to make an excursion to-morrow into the Valley d'Aspe, and over the mountains to Jaca, in Spain, and have been inquiring about means of conveyance. We find the diligence goes only as far as Urdos, there being no road (except for mules) over the Spanish frontier, while many tours and guide-books have led us to expect there was one for carriages. The diligence leaves this place every morning for Urdos, the last town in the Valley d'Aspe, and reaches it about half-past three. From thence, eight hours' ride on a mule will take one over the mountains to Canfranc, the first Spanish town, and three more to Jaca.

Such is the information we have got from our smiling, talkative host, in this pleasant, venerable old town of Oleron, whilst sitting in a comfortable, well-furnished room, with a highly-polished oak floor, which reflects the walnut secretaire, and bedsteads with their white and blue coverlids.

It is now some time since we have met with such well-rubbed floors; and I delight in them so much, that, in spite of a bad head-ache, a hot drive, and a still hotter climbing walk into the upper town, I have been dancing and sliding along the polished surface, and performing sundry pirouettes, to the no small amusement of some peasant women, who are selling peaches and pommes cuites at a stall opposite our large, low windows.

Another source of joy besides the polished floor, and which tends (now I come to reflect upon it) in no small degree to give me l'esprit de la dance, and drive away my headache, is, that we are once more travelling *on* a plain, instead of *in* a valley, and have now only a distant though splendid view of the mountains. Oh, the delight I felt to-day the first time I saw a group of peasants with a sky back-ground to

them! Nobody can conceive it who has not passed two long months, chequered with many dark rainy days, in the narrow, deep valleys of the Pyrenees.

Yet the first thing we did, on our arrival here, was to toil up, under a broiling sun, to the church and séminaire in the high town, as if I had not had enough of climbing walks for two months!—ah, but the intense pleasure of knowing that when I had climbed that comparatively little height, I should see *over* something and beyond something, and far, far away into the clear blue low horizon, instead of finding, as in the mountain valleys, after two or even three hours laborious climbing, a high range still barring the view, and no distance to be seen, except far above over our heads!

It was market-day, and we saw the place to great advantage, though in point of dress we have made a bad exchange from the Eaux Bonnes. The capulet here is replaced by the handkerchief with the three projecting corners, the usual grisette coiffeur of the south of France: the costume of the men is the same as we have already seen. We ascended a very steep street which leads to the upper town, whose grass-grown streets and old dilapidated houses, shew that it

is gradually being deserted for the more accessible division where we lodge, and the larger one of St. Marie at the other side of the Gave d'Aspe. The view is extensive from the old town, and on a clear day must be very fine, as a large range of the high chain is visible.

To-day (the 3rd) is hot and threatening: we had hardly reached home before the rain began, and down it came "joliment."*

Oleron is a very old town; it seems to consist of three parts. The Faubourg, on the right bank of the Gave d'Ossun; the Old Town, which was surrounded with a wall, occupies

* Our dinner was excellent, and cost only six francs—that is, three francs a-head. It is worth while to remember it; we had altogether fifteen dishes, as follows, and every dish was good and well dressed:—Soupe au Vermicelle. 1st course—a chicken stewed whole, with young carrots; côtelettes de mouton, sauce tomâte; la cervelle à la sauce; des truites (excellent); fricandeau à l'oseille. 2nd course—roti de gibier, (Becasses, Cailles, &c.); des haricots blancs; des artichauts frits avec du pain; de la crême à la vanille. Dessert—Walnuts, hazlenuts, fromage de Rochfort, grapes, and peaches. Our bill here was the cheapest we have had. The above dinner, with vin et pain à discretion, six francs (4s. 7d.); our four rooms, six francs; breakfast for two, of tea, coffee, milk, very good bread and butter, eggs and polenta, 2. 50.; and tea, &c., in the evening, 1. 50., altogether, 16 francs, (12s. 3d.)

the steep height which lies between the Gave d'Ossun and that of d'Aspe; and then, below it, on the left bank of the Gave d'Aspe, is Sainte Marie, much the largest part, and for which the old town is being deserted.

We went into a bookseller's shop, where was a very nice, civil girl; she and her gouty father were well-informed and communicative, so we sat in the shop for some time, but could purchase no history of Oleron. Their civility induced us to buy a description of Pau, lately published. On Saturday morning we again walked up to the Séminaire, from whence the view is good, but we did not see it completely. This is a large building, now about to be deserted for the new establishment at St. Marie.

At twelve, we started for Troisvilles, to pay our promised visit to M. and Madame de M—— R——, the postillion driving four horses from the boot-box, and with a pair of leaders to take us up the steep gravel street of St. Marie. A view of fine mountains on our left; after twenty minutes, reached the remains of an oak wood, still containing some picturesque old pollarded trees. We continued for some time to wind through the valley, in which flows the little river Vert;

the road generally flat, and the scenery sylvan and pleasing—growing luxuriant vines and maize in great abundance.

We passed a good-looking campagne belonging to Madame ——; in going up the hill near her place, one of our leaders shewed a strong disposition to stop, which habit our coachman attributed to his having formerly belonged to a tax-gatherer, in whose service a stop at every house was not unusual, and our coachman shewed that he had not much power to dissuade him from the practice. It unfortunately increased as we proceeded further, and the want of skill of our coachman, though he wielded a great whip with both his hands, made our journey uncomfortable, and decided us to have a postillion for the leaders on our return.

From the little town of Aramits we began to ascend, and had a sharp hill before reaching Lannes. The scenery, though not of a grand character, is picturesque; and as the meadows had been lately cut, looked dressed and pretty. Lannes is about half way to Troisvilles.

From the height beyond Lannes, which separates it from the Valley of Montori, the view is very beautiful; the mountains, though free

from snow, are of a bold character, and an abrupt rock, the bank of which is covered with trees and verdure, is a striking object. Fern grows abundantly on all the hills. We had a long descent to a broken bridge, passed through the village of Montori, and soon after reached Tardets.

It was market-day, and, as usual in all this country, the streets were crowded. Grain of various kinds, cattle, and pigs, seemed the chief articles. Then there were stalls for shoes, bread and a kind of cake, bacon and cheese, ribbons and tapes floating in the air from a frame, ornaments, crosses, beads, &c. After leaving Tardets, we kept along the right bank of the Saissons, and in a few minutes reached our destination. M. and Madame de M—— R—— received us most kindly.

*Monday, September* 6.—*Troisvilles.*—This old chateau was built in the reign of Louis XIII., by an ancestor of the present possessor, a valorous-looking Count de Montreal, whose portrait hangs in the dining-room. He is dressed in blue armour, with red satin stockings, and fine lace ruffles round his knees. It is a most pleasant house : my bed-room, where I am now

writing, has three large windows, and the little dressing-room another—all looking different ways, each commanding different views, and all lovely. Last night, the clear southern moon lighted up the landscape, shining on the distant mountains, and causing the old terraces and fine avenue close under my windows to glow with that sort of warm, romantic hue which seems much more fitted for lovers' serenades, than can be imagined by those who have experienced only the cold, religious light shed by our northern moons.

The village church is close by; and yesterday morning the chime of a most harmonious peal of bells enticed me to the window; and there I saw the peasants, in their gayest attire, going to the early mass. A most cheerful group they were. And after service was over, some lingered under the lime avenue, and some walked along the terraces and flower gardens of the chateau: under those trees they have their village fêtes—it is there they dance, and sing, and play at nine pins, between the house of prayer and the dwelling of their Seigneur—the priest standing by, and the lord of the soil and his guests looking on. But the peasant's mirth

is innocent—he is enjoying the day of rest in the manner he has been taught to think right; and the presence of the priest, his Maker's representative, and the smiles of his temporal master, the good-natured owner of the chateau, only add to his delight.

And thus yesterday was passed; the melodious bells calling several times a happy population to come and give thanks to the Author of their blessings, and pray for a continuance of them; and some who, from recent affliction or illness, could not afterwards participate in the gay dance or merry games, remained in the house of God, whose doors are ever open, and whose decorated altars are always ready for the suppliant's prayer.

The Duchesse de Berri once breakfasted on the terrace of this chateau, under a fine large oak, which had adorned the grounds even long before the castle was built—a venerable contemporary of Francois I., and under whose pleasant shade the brave gentleman in blue armour and lace knee-ruffles may have often luxuriated. This aristocratic tree, which may have existed, for aught we know, in the time of a still more remote ancestor of this family,

the Count de Montreal, who possessed that venerable castle of Urtubi, near Urugne, when Louis XI. had his interview there with the Kings of Aragon and Castile; this tree, called in its latter days "the Duchesse de Berri's Oak," was, during the eventful month of July, 1830, struck by lightning, and totally destroyed!

One of the village dances here represents a history of the renowned Roland and his horse. The most active of the men is dressed so as to represent a horse, with iron-bound shoes on his hands and feet; he kicks and plunges to prevent the others from coming near, while they are to try and catch him. All this pantomime is danced to a wild air, and whoever succeeds in catching the formidable horse, becomes the Roland of the fête, and receives the prize.

We do not reckon the French a comfortable nation, they had however very good ideas of comfort, even in the time of Louis XIII. Nothing can be more luxurious and enjoyable than this chateau, and yet it has been very little altered since that time—far more advanced in luxury than our edifices of that period, though this climate would seem to require less than ours. Most of the family pictures were burnt

by the enraged peasants at the revolution, and the house was greatly injured, the furniture all destroyed, and the hall converted into a bake-house for the troops. M. de M—— R—— has repaired it, and will soon have the place in very nice order. It is now a very comfortable house. Luckily, the portrait of that Count de Troisvilles who built this house escaped; the same who endeavoured to destroy Richelieu by obtaining a written order from Louis XIII., but was not able. Among the few other portraits which escaped, is an original one of Louis XIV., when a child, with rosy cheeks and point ruff; the others are the old Duchesse de Berri, daughter of the Regent Orleans; and the young Bourbon King of Spain, which was painted when he passed by here to take possession of his kingdom.

I like the French style of living—the dejeuner à la fourchette at eleven, gives a long independent morning. We had some tea, at eight, in our room, and at eleven went down to an excellent breakfast. The situation of Troisvilles is very pretty, having the advantage of the river and its fertile banks of wood, and a number of undulating heights, backed by mountains. M. de M—— R—— has planted a good deal, the

walks are well kept, and as he now principally resides here, he will continue to improve it.

Soon after leaving Oleron, we quitted Bearn, and entered Basque—the languages are totally different, the Basque being very peculiar. There are in it indications which would seem to point out the period when this country was occupied by the English—for instance, this morning a party of villagers were playing at ball near the house—a game at which they are expert; I was surprised to hear the player, who gave out the ball, do so precisely as in England, first saying—"Play." I found afterwards, it is not a Basque word; and is only used to call attention to the game. It must have remained from the old time when the English possessed this part of the country. An English name is also given to a mixture which is looked upon as a restorative—the remains of the buillon is mixed with wine, and so drank; this draught is considered very strengthening after fatigue, and is called "good health."

We drove to-day, in an open carriage, to Mauleon, which lies about five or six miles down the valley—a very pretty drive. Unluckily, the day was not fine, and a shower came on just

as we got there, which prevented us from going up to the old castle, now a prison—the view from which, in fine weather, must be very good. Mauleon is an interesting town of great antiquity, and stood several memorable sieges in the wars of our Black Prince. It has one of those curious old churches, said to have been built by the Templars, and which are common in this country. They have a singular tower, terminating in three rounded projections: below them is a kind of shed where the bells are kept, and the eastern extremity is circular.

At Mauleon we saw an old mansion-house, of considerable size, ornamented with fine carving, in a very good style. It is occupied by a family, who a few days ago narrowly escaped destruction during a storm; the lightning struck the hall, where they were at dinner, injured the building, but providentially hurt nobody. I took a sketch of Mauleon from the road leading to Navareins, and one of Troisvilles, on our return.

Many of the peasants here, and in the rest of the Pyrenees, are proprietors; those who are tenants are so at will: six months' notice on either side, will break the connexion; the land-

lord receives half the crop. After breakfast to-day, we took a walk to the other side of the River Saissons: crossing the river by a nervous bridge for a carriage, for it was very narrow, and without any guard: we then ascended the stream, and had a pretty view of the château, backed by woods, and graceful heights. We crossed the river again, and had a beautiful view of Tardets. It is an old bourg, and some of its inhabitants, though differing, neither in expenditure nor appearance, from their neighbours, are very rich—worth 150,000 or 200,000 francs. We went into the church, a small, ancient building, which was formerly a chapel to a chateau which stood on an adjoining hill, where the vineyard is now. It belonged, I think, to a Count Wirtemburg, a branch of the Montmorency family. We met the curé, who removed a curtain to shew us the picture of a Magdalene, which appeared well painted: it is by a Spanish master, and has in the corner the Montmorency arms. He complained sadly of the inadequacy of the church to the present population; and, indeed, the most curious thing about it is the way in which galleries have been piled one on the other, to give more room. We had a very pleasant walk, and

after an excellent dinner at six o'clock, had some chess and music in the evening.

There is a curious tradition that the round, isolated mountain, which stands up the valley near this place, is hollow, and that once there existed through it a secret passage into Spain.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Excursion to the Vallée d'Aspe—Return to Pau.

*Oleron, Tuesday, Sept. 7th.*—Left our pleasant friends and their lovely abode at Troisvilles, and returned to our comfortable apartments and smiling host at the Hotel Condesse. Our drive here was beautiful, but I was far from well, and therefore only half enjoyed it. As we passed through Sainte Marie, we stopped to see the church, which is remarkable for its rich ornaments. I afterwards heard that the church of Sainte Marie is also famous for the richly-embroidered vestments of the priests. We saw some ill-executed reliefs on the altars, particularly one in the right aisle from the entrance; these are richly gilt, as are some statues; but nothing in good taste. The extreme heat, and

a swelled face, threatened again to prevent our long-intended visit to the Valley of Aspe. However, when W. awoke me the next morning at five o'clock to know how I was, the swelling being better, I muttered a half-sleepy assent to the proposed expedition, and by seven we were in a little rough carriage, with two lively horses, driven by a fat coachman, and on the high road to Spain.

The scenery is different from any we have seen, being a succession of small, crooked valleys, divided by very narrow defiles. The road to the Vallée d'Aspe is in general excellent; and beyond Bidous great improvements are taking place, with a view of making by this route a carriage communication between Paris and Madrid: this would be realizing a project of Napoleon's, and would be much shorter than those by Bayonne and Perpignan. After leaving Oleron, instead of ascending the paved hill of St. Marie, we turned to the left, and kept along the Gave in front of the new Séminaire, and entered a rich plain; met abundance of carts drawn by bullocks, and numbers of people on the road, many coming to the fair of Oleron, which is to take place to-morrow, and at which a great number of horses are sold. Arras is a

pretty village, and commands a good view; but that descending to the river, opposite to the village of Escot, is still finer; a lofty, rocky outline, and the nearer heights covered with fern, now in some patches beginning to assume its autumn tint. The farmers are busily employed getting in their second crop of hay; this gives a dressed appearance to the fields, and was peculiarly striking to-day, as rocks partially covered with wood are of frequent occurrence, and rising from the brilliant green meadows, they have a look of refinement, as if they were thus arranged to ornament pleasure grounds.

There was great variety in our drive to-day. After leaving the plain of Oleron, we had a succession of three or four valleys—each with its narrow entrance—sometimes so narrow that nature made a passage only for the torrent, and art, by cutting through the rock, has added the road. As we descended to the Pont d'Escot, a curious conical lime-stone rock occurs so close to the road, that part of it was cut away to allow room to pass. Near the Pont d'Escot, the road has been greatly improved, so that the Roman inscription which once stood above is now on a level with the traveller. The upper part of the inscription appears to be in its original state, and

is almost illegible; the lower part looks as if it had been retouched. I copied part of it, as follows:—

"L. Valærius Ger
11 vir bis hanc
Viam restituit
Qui ami . . . . . .
amicus."

The number of beggars, making a sad display of their infirmities, shews that this must be a very frequented route. After crossing the bridge, the drive is beautiful: we passed a small bathing establishment, frequented, as I heard, only by the lower class; and a paper manufactory, worked by a stream close to its source,—such is the force with which it rises within a few yards of the Gave.

We again crossed a bridge, to reach another valley, and ascended to the little town of Sarance, whose church possesses an image of great sanctity, and which was, in former times, of sufficient celebrity to obtain a visit from Louis XI. I rather think the image must be in a small chapel near the road: many people were kneeling before it. The road continued to follow the windings of the Gave, and the narrow valleys full of beauty. Before reaching Bidous, we left

the river, to ascend a hill, and at its top, and immediately before entering the town, had a good view of the Valley d'Aspe, properly so called, which for beauty is much inferior to the narrow valleys that, on either side, give access to it. It contains a number of villages, and therefore for its limited extent must have a great population. The mountain outline is fine, but the valley itself is bare of trees. It contains six or seven villages in its limited space, and in early times, before its union with Bearn, was a little republic.

We stopped at the inn, which is not in any way attractive, but as it has a reputation far beyond that of Urdoz, we may conclude the latter to be very bad. The heat had been great this morning, and increased as we advanced; but the drive beyond Bidous was beautiful—superior in grandeur of feature to the approach on the other side. We continued in the flat valley by an excellent road to beyond Accous; which is the largest village in the valley, and, I think, existed in the time of the Romans. It was the birth-place of Despourrins, to whose memory an obelisk has lately been erected, in a good situation, on a green height overlooking the village.

The mountain outline is very fine, particularly

above Accous. We soon after approached the termination of the valley: as at Pierrefitte and other places, the rock projected so far as barely to allow a passage for the Gave, and a very narrow and bad road; now an excellent one is nearly finished, which, by blasting away the rock and building over the torrent, has been made sufficiently wide. Near it is a curious old bridge, the Pont de Lescun, very steep, and without a parapet: it leads to the villages of Lees and Osse; the latter lies nearly opposite to Bidous, and is remarkable for having its population half protestant and half catholic, yet living together in perfect harmony. What a blessing it would be if they could give Ireland the receipt!

We advanced, and passed on our right, on the other side of the Gave, the Valley of Lescun, terminated by a fine height, and is said to have a cascade of considerable beauty. As we advanced, the valley behind us seemed shut in by a great fortified height—the perpendicular rock rising abruptly from the woods, which cover the mountains below. It has a similar effect as the formation about Les Eaux Chaudes. In this narrow valley, irrigation is well managed by canals, at different heights along the Gave.

We passed through the village of Eigun, with the smaller one of Cette above us, and arrived to within half an hour of the Portalet, and three-quarters from Urdos, when the heat fairly drove us back. The Portalet, a passage between two rocks, is said to be curious, and the road, so far as we went, is excellent, and is, of the mountain approaches to Spain, the best, and the longest way practicable for a carriage.

On our return, the grand line of rock resembling a fortification was finely before us. We stopped at Bedous for dinner, which was, all things considered, better than we expected; and afterwards, paid a visit to Madame G——, of whom our amiable little bookseller at Oleron had spoken to us: her garden is rather pretty, and commands a good view of the valley. It was nearly half-past four when we started on our return, and had a delicious cool drive, enjoying still more, perhaps, than in the morning, that beautiful part of it between Sarance and the Pont d'Escot. The comforts of our inn at Oleron were quite wanting to me, who had suffered much with a headache during the whole drive. I laid down on the sofa, and thought of all the beautiful scenery we had passed through.

On reflection, the chief features of the Valley d'Aspe seem to be sloping lawns interspersed with forest trees, sometimes rising to the summit of heights which though lofty are not so uncomfortably perpendicular as those of the Hautes Pyrenees, and yet they are by no means deficient in boldness.

*Pau, Thursday, Sept. 9th.*—There was a fair this morning at Oleron. We left it about nine o'clock, in great confusion, and arrived here at twelve, in great heat. On leaving Oleron, we met crowds of people and cattle flocking into it, for the fair. The view of the mountains on our right very fine. After continuing for some time in a varied and pretty country, we ascended a long hill, and enjoyed from its summit a fine view of the mountains on the right, and over a richly-cultivated country, dotted with habitations, on the left. At Gau, we joined the Eaux Bonnes road, and soon afterwards reached Pau, and fortunately found rooms vacant at the Hotel de France—rather an unusual event at this season of the year. The day was cloudy, but this evening disclosed the mountains in all their beauty, and from the terrace walk we saw the sun set on each succeeding height. The band played, and

we walked up and down the promenade, enjoying the pleasure of meeting some kind friends whom we rejoiced to see again.

*Saturday, Sept. 11th.*—The weather is intensely hot; it has been most oppressive since our arrival. I feel so imbued with heat that I cannot fancy I can ever be cool again. The first day of it was luxurious, and I enjoyed the sort of impossible-to-do-anything, darkened-room life, which we led; but it is now getting serious, and the impossibility to stir out till night has in some measure cooled the scorching ground, becomes very annoying.

*Sunday, 12th.—Pau.*—Still hotter than ever; I can scarcely move, and am kept a closer prisoner by the sun than we were, on our former visit here in July, by the rain. After sun-set, however, we have contrived to visit the beautiful old castle, of which I have said very little; but it has been so fully described by every one who has written on the Pyrenees, and its historical recollections are so well known, it would be useless to repeat them; particularly as we intend to see Foix—the ancient town from which the monarchs of Bearn originally came; and though still more interesting, and far more ancient, it

appears to be very rarely visited by tourists. When we arrive within its ancient walls, I shall endeavour to describe it, and insert some interesting quotations relating to its former celebrated inhabitants.

A pleasant party at Miss F——'s, Saturday. Met two Spaniards who sang very well—one, a priest, of whom we heard the interesting trait, that he gave up some scholars to whom he was teaching Spanish to a poor Carlist colonel, because he had a wife and large family.

We have arranged to start for St. Gaudens to-morrow, and intend to proceed afterwards by St G irons and Foix to Ax, in the Eastern Pyrenees. We shall leave Pau with great regret; its recollection must always be endeared to us, from the many kind friends it contains, and from the great kindness and hospitality we have received.

## CHAPTER XV.

Tarbes—St. Gaudens—St. Girons—Foix, and its ancient castle—Journey to Ax.

*Saturday, September 18th.—Ax.*—A little unfrequented bathing-place in the Eastern Pyrenees, three days journey to the south-east of Pau. Last year I made up my mind that it was very foolish to travel *northwards* in search of health, pleasure, or amusement; and now I am come to the same conclusion, and still more strongly with regard to the south. I cannot imagine how the sudden and violent changes of this climate can do good to any one; and so far from my spirits being elated or soothed, they were never so depressed, or in such a painfully irritable state. So much for southern suns!

After our long residence at the baths, I was pleased with Oleron, as a permanently inhabited town, a place occupied during the summer season only, has always a melancholy effect on

me—I cannot help thinking how sad it must look in winter, when every one is gone.

The air feels pleasanter here than in any place we have visited since Paris; and the face of the country all the way from St. Gaudens has soothed and gratified me. The buildings, costume, and country present a new aspect, and, just now, one of great singularity. The plains are occupied by large fields of sarazin, now " white for harvest." Above these, the dark vines and their purple fruit are festooned from one tree to the other, which, for this purpose, are planted in long rows, so that at a distance they resemble immense bridges or aqueducts thrown over great lakes and rivers.

The towns, perched on rocky, conical heights, are generally surmounted by the ruins of an old castle, and surrounded by venerable walls crumbling to decay. They tell the imagination many a tale of past grandeur, and feats of arms, in the romantic by-gone days of chivalry. All these towns, particularly Foix, have a grander and more ancient aristocratic look than those of the Western Pyrenees, not excepting Pau itself; but then they bear fewer marks of *present* affluence and prosperity.

The population here looks more Spanish, and

the round berret of Bearn and the Pays Basque is replaced by a long, hanging lilac cap, something like the Catalonian. The men wear a light-blue coat, generally suspended over one shoulder; women, close-coloured caps, trimmed with a row of lace put plain round the edge, which has rather a pretty effect.

On arriving at Ax, we were in despair at the extreme dirtiness of both hotels, but with a little perseverance we succeeded in getting tolerable lodgings. After a late breakfast or early dinner, a kind of dejeuné dinatoire, furnished by a most civil, bowing traiteur, I mounted a donkey, and we set off on the road towards Spain. Near the town are some interesting old castles, attributed to the Romans; but, before I say anything more of this place, I will give the notes I made in the carriage during our three days' journey from Pau to Ax.

We left Pau on Thursday, at a quarter before five—a beautiful starlight morning. Our road lay over part of the extensive lande called le Pont Long. In part of this, Henry IV. stuck in a bog, whilst snipe-shooting. How familiar this sounds, and how vividly does it set before us the every-day life of former days! Had we passed the winter here, very possibly, a similar

occurrence might have happened to W——. The road is quite flat, and is shaded with fine chesnuts and oaks. The mountain range unfortunately became gradually clouded, and this interfered with the complete enjoyment of the noble view of the plain of Tarbes and its outlines, with the village of Bios and its fine church in the fore-ground. We drove slowly, so that it took us four hours to reach Tarbes. We were recommended to go to the Hôtel de l'Europe, but I must say that the Hôtel de la Paix seems by far the better house. Crowds of country people were flocking in for the fair, which is to take place to-day, so that Tarbes was seen to advantage; it is a large place: we went to see its cathedral, which is remarkable for six very fine marble pillars which support the canopy over the high altar.

At Tarbes, Froissart says he was very comfortable at the Hotel of the Star, and remained there the whole day, "for it was a commodious place, and has a handsome river." Edward the Black Prince, and his wife, visited the Count of Armagnac at his court here; and the persuasion of the Princess of Wales caused the Count of Foix, who came to pay his respects to her, to do

a generous act, of which Froissart gives an interesting account.*

A long stage to Lannes Mazan—thirty-three kilometres, (upwards of twenty English miles,) between five and six of which were in the

* During the time the Prince and Princess of Wales were at Tarbes, the Count was in his town of Pau, erecting a handsome castle adjoining to the outskirts of the town, and on the river Gave.

As soon as he was informed of the arrival of the Prince and Princess at Tarbes, he made his preparations, and visited them in great state, accompanied by upwards of six hundred horse and sixty knights. They were much pleased at his visit, and entertained him handsomely, as he was well deserving of it; and the Princess paid him the most engaging attentions. The Count d'Armagnac and the Lord d'Albreth were present, and the Prince was entreated to request the Count de Foix to release the Count from all or part of what he was indebted to him for his ransom.

The Prince, being a prudent as well as a valiant man, having considered awhile, said he would not do so, and added: "Count d'Armagnac, you were made prisoner by fair deeds of arms, and in open battle; you put our cousin, the Count de Foix, his person, and his men, to the hazard of the fight; and if fortune has been favourable to him and adverse to you, he ought not to fare the worse for it. Neither my lord and father nor myself would have thanked you if you had entreated us to give back what we had honourably and fortunately won at the battle of Poitiers, for which we return thanks to the Lord God." The Count d'Armagnac, on hearing this, was quite thunderstruck; and, notwithstanding he had failed in his expectations, he made a similar request

plain; and in clear weather the view of the chain of mountains, particularly of the Pic du Midi, must be very good; but now, alas! all was in obscurity, and so far as we were this day concerned, it were as good that the great pic had never been; to us, the landscape, deprived of its chief ornament, was reduced to the beauties of wood and cultivation. From the plain we had a

to the Princess, who cheerfully entreated the Count de Foix to grant her a boon.

"Madam," replied the Count, "I am but a small gentleman, and an insignificant bachelor, therefore I cannot make large gifts; but if the boon you request do not exceed sixty thousand francs, I grant it." The Princess was anxious to gain the whole; but the Count, being a wary man, paid much attention to all his personal affairs; besides, he suspected this boon regarded the ransom of the Count d'Armagnac. He therefore continued—"Madam, for a poor knight like me, who am building towns and castles, the gift I offer you ought to suffice."

When the Princess found she could not gain more, she said, "Count de Foix, I request and entreat you would forgive the Count d'Armagnac."

"Madam," answered the Count, "I ought to comply with your request. I have said, that if the boon you solicited did not exceed sixty thousand francs I would grant it. The Count d'Armagnac owes me two hundred and fifty thousand, and at your entreaty I give you sixty thousand of them."

Thus ended the matter; and the Count d'Armagnac, by the Princess's entreaty, gained sixty thousand francs. The Count de Foix, shortly afterwards, returned to his own country.

long ascent, having a fine oak wood, occupying the ravine on the right; the road still crowded with men, women, oxen, sheep, carts, horses, and donkeys, hurrying to the fair. The red capulet is again prevalent; but the brown berret of the men is now giving place to the hat.

After an hour and a half's drive, passed through a large bourg, Tournay; and here the secondary heights become more picturesque; the road itself is good, but hilly. Passed the village of la Nespede, near which are the baths of Accabert, which are said to be very efficacious, and where Lady W—— is staying. After the twenty-fifth kilometre, we had a steep and long ascent, to reach Malvoisin, the old castle about which Froissart tells a romantic story. This led us to a plateau of some extent covered with fern, where the Bagneres de Luchon road joins this, and we soon after reached the station. We were three hours and fifty minutes en route, and had to wait nearly an hour for horses, and then started, with the postmaster as postboy, who, however, would not undertake to manage the four horses, so we were obliged to get another driver for the leaders; but they got on famously by an almost flat road—the table land I before noticed, to Montrejean.

To-day, the clouds completely obscured the mountains, even St. Bertrand de Comminges was scarcely visible. Immediately below the hill of Montrejean the roads again separated—that of Luchon turning to the right to cross the Garonne, we kept along the left bank, and generally by a flat road. A fine view from an ascent before we reached St. Gaudens: the Garonne, and the small town of St. Valentine below. St. Gaudens is an old, irregularly built town; it was crowded with people, as all these towns are on a market day, but otherwise appeared uninteresting; we stopped at an uncomfortable large inn—I think the Hotel de France. The road will be much improved by a new passage which is now being made, avoiding the narrow streets of the town.

We started at a quarter after six. Another cloudy day,—a comfort, as to feeling, with the recollection of the heat of Pau; but it deprives our drive of much of its enjoyment, by concealing the distant mountains. Road very flat through the valley of the Garonne. A highly-cultivated plain on our right; a range of low and wooded heights its opposite boundary: then more lofty ones, and probably beyond them the Maledetta range; but to-day this is conjecture. After three-quarters of an hour, saw a fine ruin

of a castle situated on a mound on the right bank of the river, which put me in mind of Froissart's description, and of the conversation he had with his friend while riding along this road.* The country people are now busily employed in ploughing. A very rude process — a pair of oxen draw the diminutive plough, which the ploughman directs with one hand, and holds a long stick in the other to guide the oxen. I saw to-day three pairs working three ploughs in the same furrow. We had a sick horse— changing him, to act as leader, caused some delay.

We then descended to a lower level, and con-

* He says—"As we were walking among these towns and castles, in a beautiful meadow, by the side of the Garonne, the Knight said, 'Sir John, I have witnessed here many excellent skirmishes and combats between the Armagnacs and the Foixiens; for there was neither town nor castle that was not well garrisoned with men-at-arms, who engaged with and pursued each other. Do you see yonder those ruins?—they are the remains of a fort which the Armagnacs raised against those two castles, which they filled with men-at-arms, who did much damage to the lands of the Count de Foix, on the other side of the river, but I will tell you how they paid for it. The Count de Foix, one night, sent his brother, Sir Peter de Béarn, with two hundred lances and four hundred peasants, laden with faggots and as much wood as they could cut from the hedges, which they piled around this fort and set on fire, so that the fort was burnt and all in it, for none received quarter, and since that time no one has dared to rebuild it.'"

tinued in it to Lestelles: where are the ruins of a castle, and beyond it saw two others. A number of excellent farm-houses scattered over the country and along the road. We now left the flat, and, ascending, reached a pass, where a projecting line of rock has been blasted to make room for the road, and further widening and improvement is now being done. The view of the river, and a house with plantations on a height overhanging it on the opposite side is very pretty. At Martory, we left the direct road to Toulouse, and crossed the Garonne, by a bridge which has a kind of triumphal arch upon it. A long and steep hill brought us to Montsaunes, where is a very curious old church, with the triple-headed steeple, like those in the Valley of Mauleon, attributed to the Knights Templars.

There is a road to St. Beat on the right. On the left is Salies, a large bourg, with a ruined castle. At Mane, the station, we forded a tributary of the Salat: here, opposite the post, is a fine elm, said to have been planted at the birth of Henry IV. We were now in the valley of the Salat—it lay to our left. The country is rich and cultivated, covered with vines festooned to standards over fields of sarazin, a very useful grain, as it is often sown after the rye or corn

has been cut, and ripens before winter. At a distance, its white flower looks like water, and the rows of vines like rows of arches. A very Italian-looking place, on a commanding, conical height at Prat.

St. Lizier, on the Salat, is very picturesque, partly on the height above the river, and enclosed with a very ancient-looking wall, and remains of towers. An old church and towers crown the whole. One of the towers is of an octagon form, and seems built of marble. There is a steep bridge over the river. We kept on the left bank, and soon reached St. Girons, an ancient place, whose principal attraction to us was an excellent déjeuné à la fourchette, à l'Hotel de France. We were a great curiosity to the worthy St. Gironites, and the children were in ecstasies at seeing themselves reflected in our rumble. Whilst breakfast was preparing, we walked on the promenade, and to the principal church. some gaudy altars, but I saw nothing remarkable. Pigs and geese are the chief commodities: the geese are fatted to a great size.

The Valley of the Salat is said to be very interesting: Seix is a small town in it, and, from its commerce with Spain, of some importance. Near

it are the ruins of the fine Castle de la Garde, one of those destroyed by the policy of Richelieu, in the reign of Louis XIII.. Mont Valier is a fine height, near the extremity of this valley, more than 8500 feet high, from whence the view is said to be of great beauty, so that, altogether, the Valley of the Salat is well worthy of a visit.

Though on leaving St. Girons, we left the Valley of the Salat, we still continued in beautiful scenery, and, about two hours' drive from St. Girons, reached a pretty chateau, belonging to the Marquise de Castelnan, backed with wood; near it is another handsome castle, and a third on the summit of a wooded height. The character of this scenery is a succession of wooded elevations, many of them crowned with a dwelling, one of those substantial farm-houses which are general in this country.

La Bestide de Serons an interesting old place, is situated on the Arise, and partly built on the side of a rocky height. Its old wall, tall houses, open galleries, and flat-tiled roofs, give it a southern and picturesque air. Near it is the ruin of an old tower, called the Tour de Loup, with which a curious story is connected.

Gaston X., Count de Foix, had been for some

time married to a young lady who was only fourteen, when he was summoned by Philip le Bel to march with his contingent of troops, and join his sovereign. At the court he was captivated by Jeanne d'Artois, the niece of the King; but his marriage seemed an insurmountable barrier to wishes which he could not conceal.

"Never mind," said Philip; "you shall marry my niece."

"But the Pope will never consent," replied Gaston.

"Leave that to me," said the King; "depend upon it, you shall marry my niece."

The unfortunate young Countess, when she heard of this affair, immediately informed Pope Boniface VIII. of it, and implored his interference, who instantly issued a bull of excommunication against any priest who should marry Gaston to any other woman during the life-time of his wife.

"In spite of all this," said Philip, "my niece shall marry the Count de Foix."

So he sent for the Count and his niece, and conducted them to the chapel, where he summoned his grand almoner, whom he thus addressed:

"Here," said he, "is the altar, at which you must marry this young couple; and there is a

gallows, on which you shall be hanged, if you refuse."

The marriage took place. Some months after, the Count returned to Foix with Jeanne d'Artois, when his unfortunate first wife, in order to escape the persecutions of her rival, was obliged to quit her castle, and take refuge in the Tour de Loup, where she gave birth to a son, who was called Loup, because he was born on that saint's day. There the poor Countess remained, entirely devoted to the education of her son, until she could inhabit the Monastery of Salanques, which Gaston built for her, near the little town of Des Bordes, and of which she was the first abbess. Her son laid claim to the County of Foix, and though Philip refused to acknowledge his pretensions, yet he gave him great possessions.

Between the sixth and seventh kilometré from Foix, we ascended, and a valley of a larger character opened on us. After passing a curious rock we reached the Col des Bouches, and had a long and sharp descent into the valley of the Ariège. I have seldom seen anything so beautiful as the first glimpse we obtained of this valley, with the ancient town of Foix situated in the centre. Its most picturesque castle, as we approached, was seen to peculiar advantage,—

strongly lighted by a beam of the setting sun, which, issuing from beneath a cloud, fell alone upon the castle, whilst all the rest of the picture was in shade. On approaching nearer, we had a still finer view of the castle and its three towers, perched immediately above the town on a conical and rocky height, at the base of which flows the Ariège. A handsome bridge adds to the beauty of the scene; and, on the left, there is an elevation of far greater magnitude, surmounted by the ruins of a chapel.

We crossed the bridge, from whence the views are extremely picturesque, and drove to the Hotel de la Poste. An ill-looking, lame woman led the way into a dark and dirty passage, into which some rooms opened; but they looked so uncomfortable, and the whole concern was so repulsive, that we went to reconnoitre another inn opposite the bridge, which proved to be not only decidedly better than its rival of the "Poste," but really a very tolerable inn. Our lame acquaintance wanted eight francs for her dirty rooms: the host of the Rocher de Foix let us have his, far better rooms, for five francs: so that we were, in every way, gainers. We then went out to explore, and had a very interesting ramble.

Foix is a very ancient town; some give it a Grecian origin, attributing its foundation to the Phocians: it certainly existed in the fifth century, and its Counts were celebrated for their valour, magnificence, and wealth. In 1457, Gaston de Foix gave a magnificent fête, on the marriage of Magdelaine, the daughter of Charles VII., to Ladislas, King of Hungary. This fête is said to have cost 5000 crowns. In 1432, Gaston IV., by his marriage with Eleonore de Navarre, the heiress of that kingdom, became King of Navarre. François Phœbus died without children, and left the County of Foix to Catherine, his sister, who married Jean d'Albert, in 1488, and thus began the third dynasty. Jeanne d'Albert, the daughter of Henry of Navarre, married Antoine de Bourbon, and the fourth dynasty, thus commenced, ended by the union of the kingdom with France, in 1620, under Louis XIII. No traces of these celebrated men remain, except their castle, and that is now a prison; but, notwithstanding its present degradation, we gazed with great interest on the old walls.

I will quote, or rather abridge, Froissart's romantic account of the celebrated Count de Foix's murder of his own son:—

Gaston Phœbus, Count de Foix, had married

Agnes, the sister of the King of Navarre. Gaston had made prisoner the Lord of Albreth, but, by the intercession of Agnes and the King of Navarre, restored his prisoner to liberty on the promise of the payment of fifty thousand crowns, which was guaranteed by the King of Navarre; to whom the Lord of Albreth paid the money, but who refused to pay it over, on the pretence that Gaston Phœbus owed a similar sum, for his wife's dower.

This breach of trust exasperated Phœbus against his wife and her brother, and he despatched her to the court of Navarre, to endeavour, by a personal interview, to obtain redress. She, however, failed in her endeavours, and, fearing the anger of her husband, resolved not to return. Gaston had one son by Agnes; he was named after his father, and, as Froissart says, "grew up, and became a fine young gentleman," and "the youth might be about fifteen or sixteen years old. He was a very handsome figure, and the exact resemblance of his father in his whole form."

He took it into his head to make a journey into Navarre, to visit his mother and uncle; but it was an unfortunate journey for him and for this country. The King entertained him well,

and detained him upwards of ten days. On his departure he made him handsome presents, and did the same by his attendants. The last gift the King gave him was the cause of his death, and I will tell you how it happened.

As the youth was on the point of setting out, the king took him privately into his chamber and gave him a bag full of powder, which was of such pernicious quality as would cause the death of any one that ate of it. "Gaston, my dear nephew," said the King, "will you do what I am about to tell you? You see how unjustly the Count de Foix hates your mother, who being my sister, it displeases me as much as it should you. If you wish to reconcile your father to your mother, you must take a small pinch of this powder, and, when you see a proper opportunity, strew it over the meat destined for your father's table; but take care no one sees you. The instant he shall have tasted it, he will be impatient for his wife, your mother, to return to him: and they will love each other henceforward so strongly they will never again be separated. You ought to be anxious to see this accomplished. Do not tell it to any one; for, if you do, it will lose its effect."

The youth, who believed everything his uncle, the King of Navarre, had told him, replied, he would cheerfully do as he had said; and on this he departed from Pampeluna, on his return to Orthès. His father, the Count de Foix, received him with pleasure, and asked what was the news in Navarre, and what presents and jewels had been given him? He replied, "Very handsome ones;" and shewed them all, except the bag which contained the powder. Gaston got information that his son carried a bag fastened inside his dress, and his suspicions were excited.

Then continues Froissart:—

His son Gaston always placed the dishes before him, and tasted the meats. As soon as he had served the first dish, and done what was usual, the Count cast his eyes on him, having formed his plan, and saw the strings of the bag hanging from his pourpoint. This sight made his blood boil, and he said, "Gaston, come hither; I want to whisper you something!" The youth advanced to the table, when the Count, opening his bosom, undid his pourpoint, and with his knife cut away the bag.

The young man was thunderstruck, and said

not a word, but turned pale with fear, and began to tremble exceedingly; for he was conscious he had done wrong. The Count opened the bag, took some of the powder, which he strewed over a slice of bread, and, calling a dog to him, gave it him to eat. The instant the dog had eaten a morsel his eyes rolled round in his head, and he died. The Count, on this, was very wroth. The first words he uttered were in Gascon.

"Ho, Gaston, thou traitor! for thee, and to increase thy inheritance which would have come to thee, have I made war, and incurred the hatred of the kings of France, England, Spain, Navarre, and Aragon, and have borne myself valiantly against them, and thou wishest to murder me! Thy disposition must be imfamously bad; know, therefore, thou shalt die with this blow;" and leaping over the table with a knife in his hand, he would have slain him. But the knights and esquires interfered, and on their knees said to him, with tears, "Ah, ah! my lord, for Heaven's sake do not kill Gaston; you have no other child. Let him be confined, and inquire further into the business; perhaps he was ignorant what was in the bag, and may therefore be blameless."

"Well," replied the Count, "let him be confined in the dungeon, but so safely guarded that he may be forthcoming."

It appears that the Count still nourished deadly feelings against his son; he caused many of his followers to be put to the torture and to death, and summoned the nobles and prelates of Foix and Bearn, with the view of obtaining their sanction for his execution, but they objected.

In the catastrophe, Froissart's informant evidently wishes to soften the reality as much as possible, and endeavours to attribute it more to accident than design. It appears that for ten days the young man refused to take food; this was discovered by an attendant, who informed the Count.

The narrative thus continues:—

On hearing this, the Count was enraged, and, without saying a word, left his apartment, and went to the prison of his son. In an evil hour he had in his hand a knife, with which he had been paring and cleaning his nails; he held it by the blade so closely that scarcely the thickness of a groat appeared of the point, when, pushing aside the tapestry that covered the entrance of the prison, through ill luck he hit his

son on a vein of his throat, as he uttered, "Ha, traitor! why dost not thou eat?" and instantly left the room, without saying or doing anything more.

The youth was much frightened at his father's arrival, and, withal, exceeding weak from fasting. The point of the knife, small as it was, cut a vein, which as soon as he felt he turned himself on one side and died.

The Count had barely got back again to his apartment, when the attendant of his son came and said, "My lord, Gaston is dead!"

"Dead!" cried the Count.

"Yes, God help me—indeed he is, my lord."

The Count would not believe it, and sent one of his knights to see.

The knight, on his return, confirmed the news. The Count was now bitterly affected, and cried out—"Ha, ha, Gaston! what a sorry business has this turned out for thee and me! In an evil hour, didst thou go to visit thy mother in Navarre. Never shall I again enjoy the happiness I had formerly."

He then ordered his barber to be sent for, and was shaven quite bare. He clothed himself, as well as his whole household, in black. The body

of the youth was borne, with tears and lamentations, to the church of the Augustin friars at Orthès, where it was buried.

This celebrated Gaston Phœbus, whose reputation acquired for him the title of the Louis XIV. of Bearn, had a chequered character of great qualities and great vices. A beautiful trait is related of a descendant of his, who, however, did not live to obtain an earthly crown. This was Francois Phœbus, the nephew of Louis XI., who died at the age of sixteen years, and who, when on his death-bed, turned to his afflicted attendants, and said, "Grieve not, my friends, I go to my Father! My kingdom is not of this world."

But the name of Gaston, connected with the house of Foix, was rendered still more illustrious in the person of Gaston de Foix, Duc de Nemours. He was the son of Jean de Foix, and of Marie d'Orleans, the sister of Louis XII., and was born at Mazères in 1489. Young as he was, he was left by Louis his lieutenant-general in the Milanese, when that monarch returned to France. Gaston, though only eighteen years old, shewed himself by his skill, liberality, and courage, deserving of the important command.

To him is attributed that generous saying: "Je ne suis riche que lorsque Je donne." On the 11th of April, 1512, he defeated the united forces of the Pope, the Venetians, and the Spaniards, in the decisive battle of Ravenna, but was himself unfortunately killed in an attack on a small body of the enemy which still held together, and which he had the rash courage to assail with only a few followers. His body was afterwards interred with great pomp in the Cathedral of Milan.

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Made an early start from Foix, with the intention of avoiding the heat, and going to breakfast at Ax. A long ascent led us to another charming valley, where, not far from its centre, is a remarkable and isolated rocky height, like the Pic du Midi de Pau in miniature. In twenty-five minutes we reached Mont Galleard; here are some ruins of the castle destroyed by Louis XIII., and the views on all sides are beautiful. Above the village, on a height, is a cross, and above that, a fine rocky mountain, one of the boundaries of the valley. The commerce on this road, to judge by the number of carts we met

with, must be very great. On our left, we passed the road to Carcassone, by Ladstanet and Mirepoix; we were struck by the curious flat formation on the opposite side of the Ariège, rocky and partially cultivated; it looked like an artificial line of road, what I fancy the Scotch natural roads near Fort William might be. Some villages are dotted about the landscape, and one far up on the opposite mountain. The range of Pyrenees, at a distance, had a fine effect, and some were covered with snow. We had now a long descent by an excellent road to the river; the outline of the valley bold, rocky, and uncultivated, having the dry, parched appearance which the Appenines sometimes possess. The want of trees is the striking defect of this part of the Pyrenees; the extensive iron mines, and want of proper management is said to be the cause; but measures are now taking to remedy this evil.

The road throughout is excellent, and the approach to Tarascon very picturesque. It has an old tower situated on a rock, giving to the town it overlooks something of the character of Foix. The ruins of its castle, destroyed by Louis XIII., are still visible. An excursion may be made from here to the Grotto de Bedeil-

lac, which is said to be curious; we hope to visit it on our return. From Tarascon, a road leads to Vic-dessos: at its extremity is the Pic de Mont Calm, which is 3251 metres, about 10,026 English feet, above the sea, and said by some to be the highest point of the eastern Pyrenees. Near it, at the village of Sem, are the famous iron-mines of Rancié, one of the most important of France. The little hamlet of Sue, at the foot of Mont Calm, was the scene of the history of the "Folle des Pyrénées." In 1809, some chasseurs saw a woman, quite naked, on the top of a pointed rock—she fled, with astonishing activity, from rock to rock, and was captured with great difficulty. She was then clad, and taken care of; but again made her escape, and was soon seen, with her hair as her only covering, wandering from one almost inaccessible height to another. She eluded every attempt to take her; and, as winter came on, it was supposed she had perished; but, to the surprise of every one, at the return of the fine weather, she was again seen on the tops of the mountains. More decisive measures to take her were successful; she was removed to an hospital, at Foix, where she died raving mad.

From some hints that fell from her, she was

supposed to have been a lady, who, travelling with her husband, in the mountains, was attacked by banditti; the husband was murdered, and she was so affected by the event, that she lost her reason, and continued wandering in the Pyrenees, and, from her expressing a fondness for bears—"for they kept her warm"—it was thought that she must have passed the winter in a cave, with one of these animals.

Before we reached Les Cabannes, the scenery is very pretty—or rather, I should say, very fine. We passed a handsome chateau, on a height to our right: it was built, about one hundred years ago, by Louis Gaspard de Sales, the last Marquis de Gudanes, who was called "Le roi des Pyrénées;" and the position of this castle does credit to his taste. Cabannes is a small bourg, whose street is so narrow that I do not think two carriages could pass each other. The ruins of the Castle of Lordat, perched upon an apparently inaccessible rock, with those of Vebres further on, similarly circumstanced, shew what society was, in the time that they were built, to make such inconvenient fastnesses necessary. Their remains are now most valuable to the landscape.

The view of Ax, surrounded by lofty mountains, though of the second order, is pretty as

approached by the road of which it is the termination. A considerable traffic is carried on between it and Puycerda, the first Spanish town, and, as I afterwards ascertained, plans are now being taken for the construction of a road for carriages to the frontier; though its completion can hardly be looked for, as the expense would amount to little short of a million of francs. From what W—— saw of the line, on his expedition to Hospitalet, it is a very practicable communication—he thought it by far the most level he had seen.

We drove, as we were directed, to the Hotel Segre, kept now by M. Sitri; but found it so dirty and bad, that we started to inspect some of the smart-looking houses we had passed, as we entered the town. M. Sitri would, par force, accompany us to another hotel; but we fortunately resisted his importunities, and found very good rooms at the largest house in the town, M. Rivière's, where we are comfortably lodged for seven and a half francs a-day, the prices of the rooms being fixed by tariff.

Our landlord is a very extraordinary little fellow; he took care, several times, to inform us that he was a notaire, who had built the

house for himself, and extended it into the handsome mansion it now is. In his joint capacity of notaire and lodging-house keeper, he contrived, as we afterwards found, to make out a bill worthy of the two vocations.

Ax is a little town, not as yet much frequented by tourists, to judge by the want of guides, and consequent want of information as to excursions. Its population is under two thousand; but if the merit of the mineral waters depend on their heat, the springs here ought to be the most efficacious of any in the Pyrenees, for they are the hottest; that near the hospital is so hot, that I could bear my hand in it only for a moment: its heat, 78 of Reaumur, 207½ of Fahrenheit. It is most abundant, and is made use of by the inhabitants for cooking.

The name Ax is said to be derived from Aqs, (Aquæ.) It is of great antiquity, and the basin near the hospital was constructed in the year 1200, and was called "Le Basin des Ladres," or Lepers. The number of baths is sufficient to furnish twelve hundred a-day; but the specimen we saw was not at all inviting. The waters have also a soft, soapy quality, which makes them valuable for washing wool.

The weather is still extremely hot; but our rooms are cool, so we think ourselves fortunate in thus again finding ourselves among the mountains. In the evening, I mounted a donkey, and took a promenade on the road leading towards Spain. We passed at the foot of a rock, on the top of which are the ruins of an old castle, said by some to have been built by a lieutenant of Cæsar's.

## CHAPTER XVI.

LEGEND OF LORDAT CASTLE, AND THE FAIRY OF THE MOONBEAM.

*Ax, Thursday.* — Sometimes a trifling circumstance—the aspect of a mountain, or even the shadow of a cloud passing over it—produces such a strong impression, either pleasant or the reverse, that we feel at once it is imprinted on our memory for life. Whilst gravely writing this diary yesterday, I saw the figure of a young girl, at work under the vines in the garden. She was not very beautiful; but there was something so graceful in her attitude, and cheering in her look, that I felt happier as soon as I saw her. The extreme kindliness of her expression suddenly revived in me the persuasion, that, among all our bad qualities, good still lurks in human nature; though sometimes, in

our dark and unhappy moments, we are apt to doubt its existence.

There she is again! and a little girl is with her, who must be her sister—a spoilt one, too, for the pretty child is mischievously trying to undo the hem my unknown friend has been sewing. I must go down in the garden, and pick some of those purple grapes that grow in such tempting clusters above the fair creature's head, and then I will speak to her.

*Eight o'clock.*—I did speak, and was enchanted with the voice that answered me. Her name is Agnes. She is from Toulouse, and came to drink the waters for her health, "which has been declining for the last two years." As she said this, a deep blush suffused her pale cheek. "But I am very lonely here; for I do not like to associate with the young people—who are, indeed, above me in condition, though not, perhaps, in rank," she continued, with a smile. "My father is poor, and cannot afford to give us enough to enable us to dress so well as others."

I talked to her for some time, and was more and more pleased, for she seems a genuine daughter of Toulouse—that old place, so renowned in ancient days for its floral games;

LIBRARY
OF THE
ROYAL
ARCHIVES
CASTLE

Sketched by Lady Chatterton. G.Rowe Lith. Cheltenham.

THE RUINED CASTLE of LORDAT, on the road to AX.

full of poetry, and of the spirit of the famous Isaure, with an imagination fed upon, and deeply imbued with, the fairy legends that belong to these regions. She seemed to enjoy relating them to me, rather than speaking of herself, though I tried several times to lead her to tell me more of her own history.

Among the legends, the most original, and that which appears to illustrate the glowing fancy and wild imagination of this ancient people, is the one connected with the old castle of Lordat, the ruin of which I admired so much in our drive from Tarascon that I sketched it. The legend is called, "The Fairy of the Moonbeam:"—

In those good old times, when the court of the Count de Foix rivalled in its splendour that of any king in Europe, there lived, in the neighbouring Castle of Lordat, a valiant Baron and his fair spouse, Sancha. For more than five years after their marriage, they were the fondest, as well as the happiest, pair in the whole comté.

About that time they crossed the frontier of Spain, to visit, at Barcelona, the King of Aragon, who was related to the Baroness. There, it is said, the Baron was so dazzled with the constant succession of tournaments and all sorts

of fêtes, and so fascinated by the bright eyes of the fair ladies of Spain, that he became indifferent to his once-loved wife. Sancha was much admired, and many a gallant Catalonian noble sought to win her heart; but she was not led away by their protestations, or bewildered by the gay scenes, and remained faithful to her forgetful lord.

One night, the Baron of Lordat was at a magnificent fête given by the King, and had wandered into the beautiful gardens which surrounded the palace, with the fair Countess of Segovia, who for the time engrossed his fickle heart. The moon was shining in the full splendour of southern climes, and illumined the orange-groves and statues of the old Moorish palace; but the countenance of the fair lady whose charms had induced him to forget his wife, appeared less beautiful by the pale moonlight than in the illumined halls of the palace. She seemed to be aware of this fact, and begged to return to the gay dance. Just as they were about to re-enter the dazzling halls, the Baron turned to gaze on the beautiful scene he was about to quit, and half sighed as he thought how insensible his fair friend was to its simple beauty. He suddenly

beheld a lady, who appeared to emerge from the shade of a dark orange grove, and pass into the bright moonbeams. She gazed on him with a look of intense pity. Her eyes shone with splendour far beyond any he had ever beheld; and as she slowly advanced towards him, the Baron seemed to be quite spell-bound by her surpassing beauty, and was so enchanted by the fair vision that he began to imagine he must be in Paradise. But at that moment he was reminded, in rather a sharp tone, of his mortality, by the once-admired and adored Countess of Segovia. "Why do you linger here?" she said. "I hear the gay fandango has begun again in the ball-room." So the poor Baron was obliged to proceed into the din and glare of the hot crowd. But, for him, that gorgeous palace had now lost its charm: the music grated harshly on his ear, and the glare of brilliant lamps oppressed him.

As soon as he could leave the Countess, he returned to the garden, and there his eyes were again blessed with a sight of the fair stranger. She was attired in a simple robe of snowy white, and a flowing veil half concealed the tresses of her dark hair. There was an expression of deep melancholy in her lustrous eyes, and yet

the Baron felt so happy at beholding the beautiful creature that he could not help addressing her. She answered him with much kindness; but their conversation did not last long, for as soon as the moon sank behind the distant heights, she said, while gazing upon it, with a melancholy smile, "I must now leave you, and in this place you will see me no more; but if you wish that we should meet again, return to your native valley. At the Castle of Lordat, on the night of the full moon of next month, you will find me on the southern terrace of your own garden. Farewell!"

With the words, she vanished amid the dark shadows of the orange trees. In vain the Baron plunged into the fragrant recesses of the grove—he could see nothing of the fair creature. He returned to the same spot several nights afterwards, but in vain: she never appeared.

Since that eventful night, the Baron seemed quite altered. The charms of the court, and even the beautiful Countess of Segovia, had lost their fascination; and he at last acceded to the wishes his poor wife had long urged in vain, of returning to their own castle.

The Baroness joyfully prepared to depart, full

of hope that a return to the scenes where they had passed so many happy days might revive her husband's lost affection. But he appeared gloomy and reserved, and, during the journey, treated his affectionate wife with a cold civility that was almost more hard to bear than his total neglect. However, the good and beautiful lady prayed ardently, as she had never ceased to do, that God would restore her husband's affection; and, confident in the goodness of Providence, she preserved so cheerful an air, that her attendants were often surprised at seeing it.

They travelled this very road, continued Agnes of Toulouse; for, since the time when yonder heights were crowned with Roman castles, this has been the high road into Spain—and the easiest pass, too, through all our range of Pyrenees; and I often think how many brilliant trains of warriors and gentle dames must have passed through these beautiful scenes. Well, along this road travelled our patient Baroness and her wayward lord. The sight of his noble castle, even the ardent welcome of his delighted vassals, failed to excite a feeling of joy in the Baron's heart. A dark gloom overspread his formerly joyous countenance; and many were the curses

bestowed by the vassals on the King of Spain and his dissolute court, for having corrupted the heart and destroyed the happiness of their noble lord.

The Baron passed most of his time wandering about the heights we see yonder to the right, just above his castle. He would often remain all night away from home, and return in the morning, tired and out of humour. Still the beautiful Sancha never murmured, but continued to receive him with smiles and welcome.

"So much patience and constancy must be rewarded at last!" exclaimed her attendants, who in those days participated in all the fortunes of the family, and entered more ardently into the joys and griefs of their superiors than they do now.

About three weeks after their return the Baron's manner suddenly altered; he became kinder to his wife, but still he appeared absent, and so occupied with some secret feeling, that he scarcely seemed to hear or see anything that passed. A favourite attendant of the Baroness, who had often followed at a distance the steps of her lord, in order to discover whither his nocturnal wanderings tended, declared that on the night of

the full moon she plainly saw a beautiful lady in white walking with him on the south terrace of the castle; that they talked very earnestly together for some time; the stranger appeared to be reproaching him, and pointed with her white hand, in a menacing manner, towards the windows of his wife's apartment; that he threw himself at the fair creature's feet; but just then the bright moon disappeared behind the mountain tops, and, in the dark shadow it left, she could only see the Baron standing alone, his arms folded, with a dejected air. The tire-maiden searched in the dark walks along the terrace slopes, but she could find no traces of the white lady. The postern gate was locked, and as there was no other entrance to the terrace walks except through the castle, she could not imagine how the stranger could have entered.

All this wild story she told her lady next morning, and they both searched the terrace walk the ensuing evening. They saw the Baron pace up and down, and look eagerly to the right and left, as if he expected some one, but the moon rose and set, and no white lady appeared.

Time passed on, and the Baron still continued his nocturnal walks, but they were chiefly con-

fined to the castle terraces, and certainly in complete solitude. He was kind to his wife, but spoke little, and appeared to be awaiting some expected event with great impatience. The Baron would often watch the sun-dial all day long, and as soon as the moon arose he always started up, with a countenance of eager expectation, and rushed out on the terrace walks. When the Baroness found that he always walked there alone, she once followed him, but he appeared so angry that she afterwards contented herself by sitting at the casement which looked out upon the walks.

One lovely evening in early autumn, when the moon was again at its full, the Baroness saw, from her casement, a figure, clad in white, emerge from the shade of the trelliced vines. The Baron, who had been for hours pacing the terrace, rushed towards it with extended arms; but as soon as he reached the stranger he fell on the ground apparently senseless. Sancha was so much terrified that she hastened out, and on reaching the spot she found the fair stranger gazing with looks of compassion on her prostrate lord.

"Oh, save him!" exclaimed the Baroness,

"save him, fair spirit—for such your heavenly beauty shews you to be—forgive his errors, as I from my heart have always done; and let him not perish for the rash manner in which he dared to approach you."

"Dear lady, and most injured of women, I have done your lord no hurt, and God grant that he may now even be sensible of his faults!" So saying, she touched the Baron with her beautiful hand, and he slowly rose from the ground.

"Go," she said; "follow the advice I have already given, and you will both be happy through a long existence. I have for some time watched your happiness in this my own fair valley, and saw with regret your departure for the gay court of Barcelona. The weaker sex has there proved the stronger, for, in the dangerous ordeal, she came out of the temptation with a spotless conscience. For her sake I appeared to you at Barcelona, in the palace gardens, for we are sometimes graciously permitted to appear to those mortals whose welfare interests us. And now farewell; and may you never need my presence again."

"Do not leave us, fair spirit," said Sancha,

"but remain to witness the happiness your kind interference has restored."

"My dwelling is not here," she said, with a melancholy smile. "I am a spirit of the moon; and only when that bright orb shines in its fullest brilliancy can I visit this earth. Many of my companions, though invisible, surround your path; nor could I now appear to you, but, alas! I have sinned, and therefore I am doomed not to approach this earth, which I loved too well, except in a visible form. Many of my companions can visit mortals, can enter into their joys and sorrows, participate in both, and even avert the latter, unless the affliction ultimately tend to the sufferers' good. But woe to the immortal spirit that so far forgets her bright destiny as to love a mortal!"

"Truly, this is a harsh destiny," said the Baron. "Why cannot the fortunate mortal on whom such affection is placed, be raised in the scale of creation, and rendered worthy of the spotless being who deigns to love him?"

"Alas!" replied the Fairy, "it rarely happens that man's love is so pure, so free from stain, as to permit a sister spirit from our bright orb to

unite herself with him; some few instances have occurred, but my case was not of the number!"

Here she paused, but the Baroness implored her to proceed.

"It is, indeed, too great a pleasure to hear the tones of the human voice, and feel the compassionate eyes of a good mortal upon me, not to gratify your wishes. I loved, and my affection was bestowed on, as I thought, a perfect mortal. I indulged in the blissful thought that by his virtues he would attain to a blessed immortality. Yonder was his home," she said, pointing in the direction of Foix; "a knight well known in the early history of this land. Long unseen did I hover about his path, and once, when he was about to yield to temptation and forget his better nature, I appeared to him. He was immediately so fascinated, that for months he remained faithful and devoted to my image and the service of God. But severe are the consequent trials which are kindly ordained should be the portion of those who strive for a blissful immortality, and arduous and long their probation. In compliance with his ardent prayers, I became visible once more, and then withdrew, having promised, at the

expiration of a year, to be his, if upon trial he were deemed worthy of an immortal bride. During this year of probation he went to the French capital, and there, alas!—but I cannot relate it—I cannot express my anguish when I beheld him daily growing more sensual, when I saw one good feeling after another giving way. I had sworn not to appear, and though often near him, he could not feel, or in any way be sensible, of my presence. This was to me a severe trial, for he was brave and handsome, and possessed a finer imagination, and was more devoted to poetry and intellectual pursuits than his descendant, the famous Gaston Phœbus. But he sinned—he forgot his vows of purity and faith—and when the appointed day of trial came, he was judged unworthy. I was permitted to appear. The interview took place in yonder valley, at the mouth of the grotto of Bedeillac, where he had first seen me.

"I came at the appointed hour: he was there, awaiting my arrival, unlike some, who in one short year have so forgotten their love as to shrink from the interview which is then forced upon them, and becomes an awful punishment. He came—but oh, how changed! though, on seeing me, some portion of his better nature

revived. I spoke the fatal words:—'We must part for ever! Your love for what is good has grown cold, and you have only sought me in hopes that my image might win you from those courses, which, in spite of their fascinating influence, you hate; but this must not be; we are not permitted to accept a divided heart, or to wed a mortal whose mind is sullied by the remotest stain of earthly impurity.'

"The Count was thunderstruck, and ardently implored I would give him another trial; but this was not in my power to grant, and, alas! with despair and anger, he turned from me, and plunged at once into guilt; but, blessings be upon his soul, in his latter days, when old and infirm, he repented, and I was permitted to be with him in his last moments upon earth; and now, though separated from me, he enjoys happiness, but in a degree far less perfect than it would have been, had he proved worthy of my love, and that we had ascended together to the highest heaven.

"But the stain which my pure nature contracted from this misplaced love still defiles me. To mortal eyes, since that fatal day, hundreds of moons have run their courses, and I am

doomed not to be restored to my original brightness till another mortal, through my means, becomes perfect. Be you that one," she continued, turning to the Baron. "Let friendship effect what love could not accomplish. Be faithful to your dear wife, and may you both continue daily to improve in every good feeling, and at last attain everlasting bliss."

The fair Spirit of the Moon-beam never again made her appearance; we may hope, then, that as the Baron was ever afterwards the very pattern of husbands and fathers, and chatelains—she has fully regained her former state of bliss, and that now she visits, invisibly, the inhabitants of this, her favourite valley.

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Here the fair Agnes ceased. I asked whether, on the clear moon-light nights that rejoice these regions, she had ever seen one of these aërial beings.

"Often have I looked," she said, "on the nights of full moon, and sometimes fancied I saw one, and felt happier for the thought. And when I lost a dear friend," she continued, with a blush, "the moon was at its full, and its

beams came into our room, at Toulouse. It was a poor garret, in a narrow street, and the noisy sounds of a busy town grated painfully on my ear. The moon shone full upon the bed where my little sister lay ill of the same fatal malady that caused the death of my betrothed, and then, indeed, I fancied that a thin, transparent figure stood in the beam and touched the darling child. I could not stir or speak, but a feeling of religious awe made me sink on my knees, and cover my face. I prayed more fervently than I had ever done before, that God would save my darling sister. I had before been so selfishly absorbed in my own grief that I had almost forgotten to pray. When I again looked up, the figure was gone; but certainly, from that hour, the dear child began to recover, and, thanks be to God, and our Holy Mother, here she is—the little mischievous thing you see, and the very joy of my dear old father's heart, and the comfort of mine! Without that dear child I should never have had courage to live; but now I feel existence necessary, and so I came here to drink these healing waters, and try to recover, for the sake of those two loved beings."

I trust poor Agnes may, indeed, regain her

health, and that her gentle spirit continues to be cheered by the unseen visitor, whose fancied presence seemed so opportunely to have called forth her prayers. Though imbued with the superstitious feelings so prevalent in these majestic scenes, I find Agnes well instructed, and possessed of no mean reasoning powers. We have had several conversations about invisible spirits; she is well versed in the Bible, and maintains that there is no passage in the sacred volume which precludes the belief in the existence and agency of spirits.

" 'Tis mystery all:
Darkly we move—we press upon the brink
Haply of viewless worlds, and know it not,"

Says Mrs. Hemans; and our old poet Spencer speaks of the ministry of angels, in these beautiful words—

" How oft do they their silver bowers leave,
To come to succour us that succour want,
How oft do they, with golden pinions, cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against foul fiends, to aid us militant?
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward:
Oh! why should heavenly love to man have such regard?"

## CHAPTER XVII.

Scenery of the Eastern Pyrenees—Excursion to the Spanish Frontier—Hospitalet—Valley of Andorre—Old book-stall at Ax—Fra Luis de Leon's Poems.

THERE is a pleasant shady promenade near the church, but in attractions of that kind, Ax is still far behind-hand. In the afternoon, we had our donkey again, and made an excursion to the Forges d'Orgeix; they belong to a Marquess of that name, and lie in the valley of Orlu, which boasts of a fine pic, and some bold outline. In it flows the torrent of Orlu, by some said to be so called from grains of gold being found in its sands.

A very rough path brought us, in about three quarters of an hour, to a pretty little valley, in which is the forge, and a campagne with its garden, but in a neglected state. Beyond it,

along the side of the river, is a gently-sloping wood, in which are pretty and shady walks. We came home on the left bank of the stream, where the road is better, and commands some very good points of view, particularly of the town, before we descended to join the Puycerda road.

During the morning, we had a most prolonged negotiation with our talkative landlord about horses and a guide to Hospitalet, which is on the road to Puycerda, in Spain, and to the little independent state of Andorre. He undertook to manage it for us, and did it so well, that on our return at seven, we found ourselves without either one or the other.

We received here yesterday a very kind note from M. and Madame St. J——, and we fixed to be at their chateau of Long Pré on Wednesday; so W—— resolved, as no horses can be hired, to content himself with a walk as far as Hospitalet to-morrow. The following is his account of the expedition.

"At six o'clock I started with my guide, whom I found to be an 'ancien militaire,' though only thirty-eight; he had joined the army as a substitute, for which he received fifteen hundred francs —*les quels il n'a pas mangés*. He served his eight

years, during which he had been in Greece, at the time of the battle of Navarino; he was then discharged, came home, married a woman with fifteen hundred francs as her fortune, and on the interest of their money, and his earnings in various ways, they get on very well, "because," said he, "we have no children." The distance to Hospitalet is reckoned to be four leagues; I should think about twelve English miles. The trip was fatiguing owing to the road being very stony, and sometimes roughly paved. The mountains immediately about Ax shew more timber than is usual in this part of the Pyrenees—the remains of the forests with which no doubt the mountains were once covered.

"In about an hour we reached a wild and savage pass, the finest, or perhaps I should say, the only fine scenery of the trip, a rocky gorge through which the Ariège passes to reach the valley of Ax. This wild scenery continued between the two bridges, or rather the three bridges which cross the river: the lowest is a wooden one, which, with the stone one above it, is called the Pont de la Borde de les Frates; the upper, the Pont du Col de la Scala.

"We met a shepherd driving his flock from the mountain; he said the wolves had destroyed

some of them. These formidable animals are more numerous than in the western Pyrenees. A reward of fifteen or eighteen francs is paid for a she-wolf, twelve for a male. This year, a peasant was lucky enough to find a litter of five or six, for which he received six francs a-piece, besides what he got by exhibiting them at Ax.

"After leaving the gorge, the road ascends rather more abruptly to the valley of Merens; the ascent is, generally speaking, very gradual. Merens is a good sized village, it was once a very rich one, but was destroyed by the Spaniards during the war, and never recovered. It is placed at the opening of two valleys—that to the left is fine—on its sides are good forests of firs, &c., and on the summit, pines.

"The valley of the Port de Hospitalet rises at its extremity into heights, with some snow upon them, but nothing remarkable as to form. Merens is reckoned half way. I reached it in about an hour and a half, and in another hour and three quarters arrived at Hospitalet. The scenery as I advanced became wilder and more rocky, but the heights in no part attain to anything like the boldness of the other passes. Hospitalet is a poor village, containing a population of about one hundred and twenty. By my

guide's account, it is a place of so much passage, that the host of the dirty inn where we breakfasted, with inn-keeping and other speculations, is so rich that he gave four or five daughters, when they married, twelve or fourteen thousand francs a-piece. Whilst my breakfast was preparing, I continued on the road to Puycerda, in Spain, for a quarter of an hour, to a bridge, near which is the frontier of the department, and that of the Pays Neutre of Andorre.

"This little state, which probably owes its existence to its insignificance and the jealousy of its great neighbours, is about twelve leagues long, and contains about six thousand inhabitants; their independence is said to date from Charlemagne, who granted it to them in reward for their services against the Moors in 791. The Andorrans pay to France and the Bishop d'Urgel, a tribute of 1871 livres every two years, and 900 to Spain. They have two chief magistrates called vigniers, one must be always a Frenchman, and nominated by the King of France; the other is chosen by the Bishop d'Urgel, amongst themselves; two syndics and a council of twenty-four form the government; and from what I heard, they appear to be a happy and prosperous community, many of them, however, are not

disinclined to plunder a passing traveller in a quiet way, should the opportunity occur.

"I met some travellers as I returned, who had breakfasted at Hospitalet, and were proceeding to Puycerda. As far as I could see and learn, the country does not become bolder; the contrary is the case, so far as I went, and could learn from some engineers who are employed in laying down a plan for the new road. I was advised to bargain for our breakfast, and thus paid only two francs towards the fourteen thousand, to form the dowry of the handsome but very dirty handmaid, who laid my couvert, and scolded her old mother into greater activity; a brother, a young priest, did the honours of the house to a curè, who occupied one end of the table; I and my guide the other. We had some haricots blancs, not badly dressed, ham and an omelette, a bottle of fairish wine, and pain à discretion, for my two francs; and at twenty minutes after eleven started for our return. Deducting a stop of about ten minutes at a delightful fountain, we were a little more than three hours coming home."

*Ax, Friday.*—Although this is such a remote and unknown placè, I have found more books here

than at any of the fashionable bathing places in the Northern Pyrenees. Some old book stalls, under the trees in the " Place," have afforded me much interest and amusement. I have looked over a great many time-stained copies of old French and Spanish books, and have purchased a few. The other day, I came home in great delight, with a nice copy of the old Spanish poet, Fra Luis de Leon. He was born at Granada, in 1527, and became a monk of the order of St. Augustin, in the year 1543, and many of his poems are full of the true spirit of Christianity. In the evenings, we have amused ourselves by translating some of them from the Spanish, and I will insert one, on " Self-Knowledge," which my dear friend the Viscomtesse de Satgè St. Jean afterwards put into blank verse :—

## SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH OF FRA LUIS DE LEON.

'Mid the profound abyss of nothingness,
My captured spirit dwelt enthrall'd, imprison'd,
Devoid of power, or will, or hope of freedom ;
My very being was not—life, soul, sense,
E'en fail'd me—alone, unseen, I dwelt,
Bereaved of all sweet fellowship with man ;

Those countless grains, wash'd by the ocean's tide,
E'en in their nothingness were more than I;
And the poor earth-worm, crush'd beneath the feet,
Seem'd as a very king compared with me.

In silent circuit round the starlit sky,
Moved the sixth century on rapid wing;
Whilst 'mid that lone, profound obscurity
Of deepest gloom, the Eternal Father saw me;
The God of nature look'd on me with such
A look of love benign, ineffable;
He drew me to the light of earth—clothed me
With this veil of feeble flesh, and gave me—
Oh, rich boon!—a soul immortal, which from
Its spiritual nature might arrive
Within the glorious presence of his love—
Essence divine of light ineffable.

One sole and bitter hindrance chain'd to earth
Its bold aspirings,—innate and inborn sin
Weigh'd down its lightness, and cut short its wings.
Oh, bitter trespass! what the fruits thou 'st left—
Of what rich good hast thou deprived my soul!
So soon it was created and became
One with this perishable garb of flesh;
Thou, foul Transgression! stained its robes of light,
Deprived it of all grace, and truth, and justice—
Render'd it rebel e'en to its Creator—
Blinded, perplex'd, and stripp'd of all protection;
For thee it shuns all good, and cleaves to ill.
Imprison'd in the gilded chains of vice,
Fair virtue's self thou robb'st of every charm;
And oh! for thee, in anguish deep and dread,

Flow'd the rich stream, the one great sacrifice
Of bleeding love,—all miseries with thee
Have enter'd this fair world—tears, hunger, grief,
Poverty, sickness, winter, sin, and hell.

When, in the bonds of sin, I was conceived—
Enveloped in eternal pain, the world
Slumber'd deep, chain'd in false security,
To which I was so link'd and closely bound,
That neither my own virtue, neither that
Of others, could detach or set me free.
One sole means remain'd, provided by that
Goodness infinite, and full of mercy,
Who dying, gloriously effaced our
Sorrows by his own, breaking that sacred
Heart of love, from whence in source, unfailing,
Flow'd the rich stream of grace and free salvation
For a lost world.
Then was this goodness, infinite, eternal,
Pleased to give me a new being, and my soul,
Bathed in the sacred and baptismal stream,
Was raised in purity, endow'd with those
Rich graces, meet for an heir of glory.

Oh! sweet remembrance of Almighty love!
Then did my soul devoutly promise him,
During life's span, to love naught else but Him—
Naught but was for Him and of Him alone.

Oh! if to-day at least she had fulfill'd
Her vows! * * * *

* * * * * *

I grew, and enter'd soon that age mature
Which should have found me giving my poor all
To Him who had so much, so richly given
To me. But, alas! the sacred promise,
Sign'd by this hand at the baptismal font,
Where was it? Scarce had my senses quaff'd
The vicious draught of pleasure, minister'd
By th' arch enemy of souls, than I
Forgot all good! Oh! then what heart so cold
That would not break within him at the thought?
Others for pity—mine for bitterness!

Darker than this world, when the sun withdraws
His smile of light, and plunges in the deep
His golden car, quench'd 'neath the rolling wave—
More sterile, hard, and stony than its bed,
When the soft rains of heav'n descend not there,
My soul remain'd without that treasured beam,
For which it sighs, and languishes, and weeps,—
Without that light divine reflected from
The Sun of Righteousness, and e'en without
That sov'reign dew celestial summer drops
Within the soul—corrupted, blind, deform'd,
A willing slave to pleasure and to sin.

Eternal Father! who, immovable,
Impartest life and movement to all things,
And governest in peace the wondrous whole—
What love hath stay'd the justice of thy blow?
When my ungrateful and audacious soul,
Forgetting Thee, th' eternal source of good,
Threw itself rashly even in thy presence,
'Mid the foul waters, broken cisterns, and
Corrupted streams of vice—what clemency,

Divine and matchless! which at that instant
Plunged me not in the lake of endless woe!
Divinest Pity spared, and drew my soul
Forth from this stagnant and corrupted pit,
Where, steep'd in false security, she slept,
Unconscious of her deep and foul attaint—
Esteeming her vile state of misery
So rich, so tranquil, she alone desired
That such enjoyments were perpetual.

But, at an hour unlook'd for, a soft breeze
From the Eternal Spirit reach'd my breast,
Wafting around my soul an air so pure,
So mild, the thick o'erhanging fogs which hid
The light of Heaven, were by degrees dispersed,
And all within shone forth serener day.
Then felt I all the baseness of my state;
Th' awaken'd soul beheld the vile, corrupt,
Unearthly food on which it surfeited,
And knew the fruit of such unholy joys
To be confusion and eternal death!

The fear of that just arm, inflexible,—
The angry look of an Eternal Judge,—
Death, judgment, glory, hell, consuming fire,
By turns besieged my spirit with such force,
Trembling, confused, and fearful, I remain'd
A stranger to all solace and repose.

Bathing my bosom and the earth with tears,
Igniting with my sighs the air around,
I cried—"Father of mercies! holy God!
Father of consolation—oh, forgive!
Pardon my boldness that I come to Thee!

Although I feel, in shame and deep abasement,
I merit not thou shouldst incline thine ear—
But, oh! behold the wounds my sins have made!
Poor, blind, and leprous, and most meet for pity—
Oh, Thou, whose tender love is over all,
Receive and pardon! Thus, benignant Lord,
Thus manifest its full and saving pow'r,
So richly shower'd o'er all that thou hast made
In thy just chastisements remember Mercy.
Give me not over to mine enemy!
Oh, sovereign Lord! take vengeance as thou wilt—
Afflict me with the scourge, the fire, the lance,
Cut, burn, and bruise, chastise my willing limbs
With many stripes—if, after such correction,
Thou wilt become my Saviour and my God!"

So soon these words pronounced, his tender arms
Were open'd to receive me, and his grace,
His love, and life, were granted and ensured;
Applying to my wounds that sov'reign balm—
That holy, only unction from above,
Sole remedy for sin,—my wounds were heal'd,
My flesh and spirit freed from all disease.
But, oh! this feeble and most helpless nature,
O'er which the tyrant habit holds such sway,
Though cured from this worst evil and its end,—
A monument of saving Love Divine,—
So weak and frail this tenement of flesh,
For ten long years has it been convalescent!

There is, also, a good poem of Fra Luis's on "The Vanity of the World;" and there are some

stanzas on " A Summer's Night," from which I quote the following lines :—

" O ! despertad mortales,
Mirad con atencion en vuestro daño
Las almas immortales,
Hechas á bien tamaño,
Podran vivir de sombras y de engaño ?
Ay ! levantad los ojos
A aquesta celestial eterna esfera,
Burlareis los antojos
De aquesta lisonjera
Vida, con quanto teme y quanto espera."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

Grotto of Bedaillac Tarascon—Return to Foix—Long Pré —Rural Fête—Pamiers—Journey to Toulouse.

*Saturday, Ax.*—Rode again in the evening to the Forge in the valley of Orlu—very beautiful—and red and purple tints of setting sun on the mountains peculiarly vivid. We had delicious shade all the way—just caught it, for as we slowly ascended the steep paths, the shadows moved up with us, keeping just a few yards above our heads till we at last begun to descend towards the river. It was nearly dark when we got home; we had then a grand discussion and much confusion about a guide and horses for Spain. The scene was a most ridiculous one, but I was both too stupid and irritable to enjoy it.

*Tuesday.*—I saw in the garden this morning a girl very like Mrs. N——, and I was much

amused as I watched her sitting at work with four men near her. They were all listening to the lively sallies which her lips uttered; from ten till half-past five none of them stirred! The French are much more easily amused and less irritable than the English. Very few Englishmen would have sat listening even to Mrs. N——'s wit during a whole *fine* day; and even on a rainy one, they would have manifested some sort of restlessness during so long a sitting.

*Long Pré.*—Here I am at a comfortable table at M. St. J——'s, about to occupy myself with a record of our proceedings since we left Ax, until the servant arrives to occupy the table with our first breakfast. On Wednesday, we left our friend Rivière, after giving him to understand that in charging for fire and washing, as he did, we thought him unreasonable. We started at half-past six, the drag chain broke at the first descent, which retarded our progress in some degree, so that it was near nine when we reached Tarascon. The scenery in descending this valley, is, I think, an exception to the general rule, being finer than the ascent, or was it that I was in better humour for its enjoyment? Be that as it may, I admired it greatly; passed a number of villages, so great,

indeed, that the attempt to name them would be useless, for I could not hope to succeed.

After passing through Lazenac, we approached nearer to the fine ruins of the Castle of Lordat, which we admired as we were going to Ax, and I now looked on it with increased interest on account of its moonbeam visitant.

I find that Lordat existed in the tenth century; the extent of its ruins shew what a considerable place it must have been. It is inaccessible on three sides; in 1074, Roger, 2nd Count de Foix, gave it to the Abbey of Cluni, and James I., King of Aragon, occupied it during the war between Philippe the Bold and the Count de Foix. In the wars of religion it was abandoned by the family of Lordat, and it became a ruin; they built the neighbouring Castle de l'Urs lower down, which seems to be fast following the fate of its predecessor, and is not now inhabited.

Near Albeis is one of the most picturesque parts of this beautiful drive. The fine rocky mountain on the right bank of the river, which is the important feature of the drive, here forms a good back-ground to the village. It is not merely the form of this mountain which constitutes its beauty, but its colouring also. The rock has occasional patches of reddish white,

which have a good effect, and the verdure mixed with the rock is probably the remains of the forest with which it was once covered. How beautiful is the neighbourhood of the Cabannes! We again admired the position of the Castle of Gudane.

After traversing the valley, the fine mountain on our right hand was separated from us only by the river; it forms one side of the gorge we entered, the mountains on both sides abound with grottoes. We drove past the little bathing establishment of Ussac, and had a fine view of Tarascon from the hill down which the road winds to reach the town; this road, like all the others in this part of France, is carefully attended to; near Les Cabannes a handsome new bridge has been built. In our descent to Tarascon, we passed another over a ravine, and at the town crossed the Ariège by a short but well-built bridge of hewn stone, which if not of marble, looks very like it.

Our further proceedings became a question, being pressed for time; yet the Grotto of Bedeillac, with the additional interest given to it by the Fairy of the Moonbeam, was irresistible,—so we stepped into a cumbrous old gig—funnily enough called a tilbury, drawn by a worn-out post-horse,

(cheval reformé;) and, with a postillion hung on by the shaft, we proceeded on our expedition. Consultations and preparations occupied some time, so that it was twenty minutes after nine when we started.

The drive was very interesting—the outlines of the valleys bold and fine, and as usual a number of villages. The road good—for some way quite flat, until it reaches a forge, when there is an ascent. This road leads to a large village of Saurat, and is to be continued to St. Girons. The population principally employed with the forges, or connected with them: some peasants, chiefly women, whom we met, were carrying on their heads very large sacks of charcoal. We reached the little village of Bedeillac in forty minutes. The grotto lies in a rocky height to the right; but there are several others in the mountains about, and in the steep one immediately over us, which, as we approached, I fancied was the one we were destined to explore —fortunately, *the* grotto was much easier of access, and not more than ten minutes' walk from the village.

On the summit of the great height above the village is perched a tower, probably, in "hurried

times," intended for a signal tower; they are, I understand, of frequent occurrence in this part of the Pyrenees. The preparations of finding the guide, getting the straw, &c., occupied some time—rather an annoyance, circumstanced as we were. We walked on, and, whilst waiting, had an opportunity of inspecting the grotto, so far as daylight permitted it.

I am not much versed in grottoes, not having seen, so far as I recollect, any of importance, except those of Michelstown, which cannot be compared for grandeur and extent with the grotto we were now exploring. This, too, has the great additional advantage of being throughout so lofty as not to require stooping, and of being, with very trifling exceptions, perfectly dry, and the passage tolerably level—in short, it is very easy of approach. The great hall, which is sufficiently lighted from the entrance to be seen in its details, is very grand. The stalactites and stalagmites, which were once here, have been carried off, but I believe the lofty roof was never supported by pillars; the ceiling is a great arch thrown across the opening, studded with ridges of petrifactions, and the fine open space is very impressive.

As we advanced to the narrower part, light became necessary, and we had a further delay until the straw could be got to light; this point attained, the guide preceded us, holding a bundle lighted, which he renewed, from time to time, from a supply carried by his wife. The effect of light thus thrown on the pillars and masses of rock was striking, and the sight was altogether very interesting.

Sometimes the roof was studded with rounded stalactites like the ornaments of a Gothic ceiling, at others, rising to a height beyond the reach of our light, left its extent to the imagination. The most impressive part is that called the Tombeau de Roland; it is an immense stalactite, which, detached by some convulsion from the roof, has fallen so as to give the idea of a huge sarcophagus. It is said to be twenty-four feet long, twelve wide, and eighteen high, and, placed as it appears to be in the centre of a great hall, is an apt sepulchre for the hero who made the famous brêche.

Besides this, all the remarkable stalactites have been christened. "The great and little Benitiers," are stalagmites, formed by the water dropping into a basin, the sides of which are formed and are continually increasing by the overflowing of

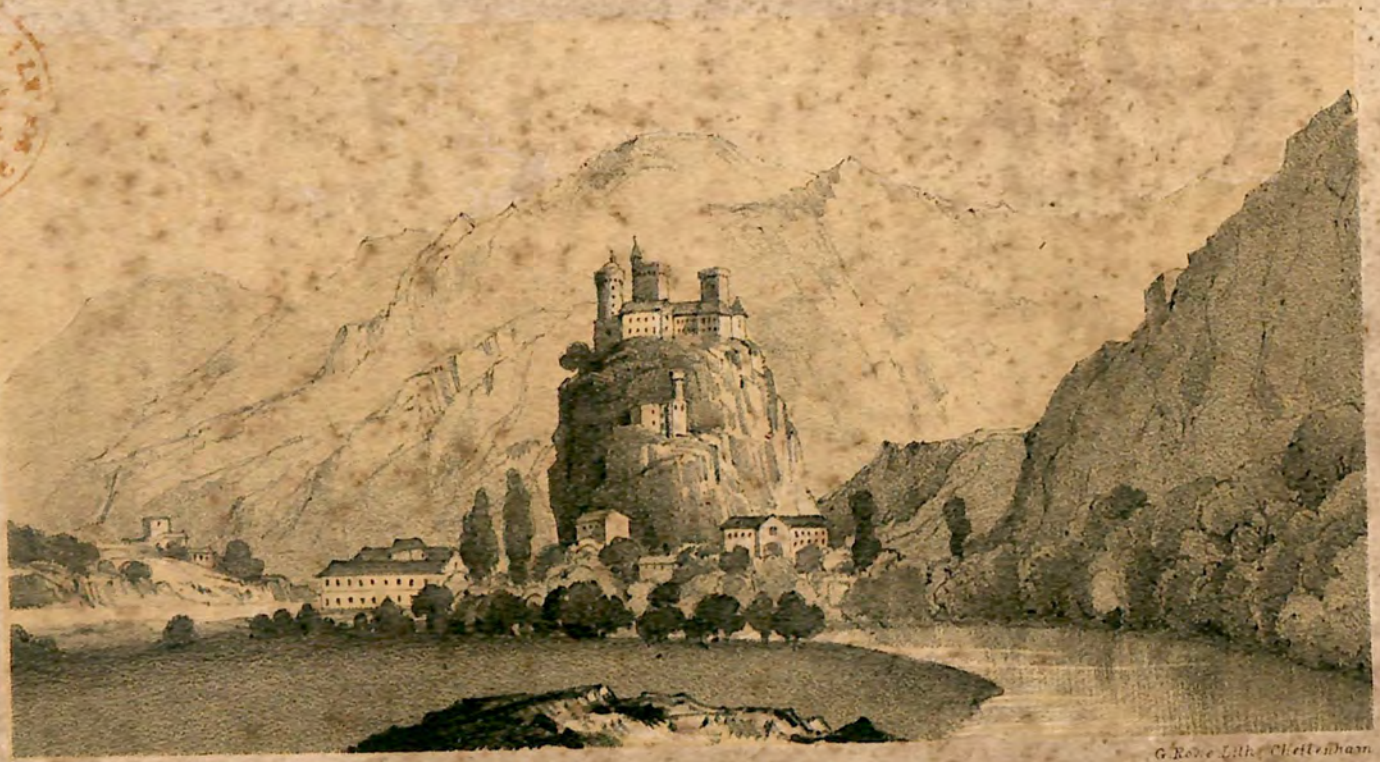
the basin ; "the Bishop's Throne ;" "the Confessional ;" "Two Bells," (folds of petrifaction, which when struck, give, among the gloom and echoes of this great vault, a very deep and solemn tone ;) "the Organ," &c. That of the "Duc d'Orleans" is a very large pillar near the extremity : the present king must have given it a name. It is a mistake to say it requires so long a time to go to the extremity. I should think we did it in half an hour, even stopping to see the various objects. We thought two francs should have satisfied our guide, but were mistaken ; he asked three, which I found was an imposition—the usual charge is ten sous a head. The hunt after crystallizations injures the stalactites very much. I was greatly pleased with our expedition ; and just at twelve, rejoined the carriage at Tarascon.

We then proceeded towards Foix ; passed a little suspension bridge, the object of which is to connect the plaster quarries of Arignac with the kilns of St. Paul, Celles, &c. ; the plaster is celebrated. We again admired the fine Pic du Midi rock, and the approach to Foix. Our landlord of the Rocher de Foix was delighted to see us, and gave us a breakfast which would have done credit to the Rocher de Cancaille itself. Among

its leading excellences were Foie de Canard and rails; this, with a long walk round the town, and the sketch which is here given, gave us plenty of occupation until half-past three, when we started for M. St. J——'s.

The road is tolerable, but not a route Royale; we passed a rich country, still in company with the river Ariège. In the little town of Varilles, not far from Long Pré, there was a fair, and we had great difficulty to get through. Just outside the town, a respectable old man narrowly escaped being hurt; he was startled at finding our horses near him, and, I believe fell between the leaders —we were going very slowly, so he was immediately dragged out, and nothing happened; on regaining his feet, he immediately said to the postillion—"Postillion, il n'était pas votre faute."

We were much pleased with the Chateau de Long Pré, where we arrived about five o'clock. M. St. J—— is constructing a canal to communicate with the Ariège, so as to permit the irrigation of the low meadows below the house, and thus greatly increased the value of the property; he told us that the canal has cost 2000*l*. During the winter he employed many Carlists on it, which gave rise to some interesting scenes, witnessed by Madame——; such as that of a girl who had walked



Sketched by Lady Chatterton

G. Rose Lith. Cheltenham

FOIX from the road to TOULOUSE

eight days, to look for her brother, whom she discovered among the workmen; another of a poor woman, broken-hearted for the loss of her husband, having here found a friend who gave her intelligence of him. Every person in this country seems to be violently opposed to the existing government, so much so, that though decided "legitimistes," and with all the horrors of 1789 before them, would risk a revolution for a change.

M. St. J—— had been absent on particular business, and returned on Friday night, having been as far as Perpignan. He went from Carcassone by Limoux, &c., and the Col de St. Louis, which he described as "très gradiose"—splendid wild scenery—the road, very steep, along the side of a precipice, and generally without a parapet. The speculation in which he is engaged is the acquisition of a large extent of forest, which, if successful, is to do wonders for the actionnaires. One of the principals, he having five shares, dined with us on Saturday; he wanted us much to purchase an estate in the Pyrenees, now for sale, 2000 hectares of land, forests, &c., for 60,000 francs. The woods in the Pyrénées Orientales are said to be very fine, being what is termed, forêts vierges.

*Saturday.*—We drove to-day with Madame de

St. J—— G—— to Foix, and ascended to the castle; the view is grand, but in adapting it to its present destination (a prison) all traces of its former illustrious possessors have disappeared. The round tower is very fine; in it are the cells of prisoners condemned to death. It is now occupied by two brothers, both found guilty of the same murder, and for which another brother has already suffered—that of a master of a forge. He lived with their sister, and had two children by her; he had long promised marriage, or a settlement, but always deferred doing so, until at last the brothers became so exasperated, that they murdered and robbed him. Since our visit, the two remaining brothers have been executed.

To-day, a great fête at Long Pré, and we enjoyed our ramble in its beautiful walks and gardens extremely. The canal was opened, and found to succeed, so the Vicomte gave a sheep to the workmen, and they afterwards danced—he having also provided the music. The men danced very tolerably, but the women were not at all attractive, either in costume, appearance, or dancing, which consisted of the gallopade introduced into the contre-danse, and waltzing. We had some Stentorian singing also, making up in noise and jollity what it wanted in sweetness.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Pamiers — Toulouse — Carcassone — Disagreeable journey to Narbonne—Fine Cathedral—Miseries of the South Beziers—Monotony of Olives and Vines.

*September 28th, Toulouse.* — We left our kind hosts at Long Pré this morning, with much regret, and directed our course towards Toulouse. Pamiers, as approached, is a striking place; its old towers and churches, with an octagon belfry to one of them, have a picturesque and curious effect. Sometimes these towers are put on in the strangest way. Froissart speaks in high terms of the former beauty of this place; he passed through it on his road from Toulouse to Orthes. The account of his journey is so interesting that I cannot avoid making an extract from it:—

"At the time I undertook my journey to visit

the Count de Foix, reflecting on the diversity of countries I had never seen, I set out from Carcassone, leaving the road to Toulouse on the right hand, and came to Monteroral, then to Tonges, then to Belle, then to the first town in the country of Foix—from thence to Mazères, to the castle of Saverdun—then to the handsome city of Pamiers, which belongs to the Count de Foix, where I halted, to wait for the company that were going to Bearn, where the Count resided.

"I remained in the city of Pamiers three days; it is a very delightful place, seated among fine vineyards, and surrounded by a clear and broad river, called the Liege.

"Accidentally, a knight attached to the Count de Foix, called Sir Espaign du Lyon, came thither on his return from Avignon. He was a prudent and valiant knight, handsome in person, and about fifty years of age. I introduced myself to his company, as he had a great desire to know what was doing in France. We were six days on the road travelling to Orthes. As we journeyed, the knight, after saying his orisons, conversed the greater part of the day with me, asking for news, and when I put any

questions to him, he very willingly answered them."

As they were travelling through the steep and difficult pass of La Garde, of which Froissart says that six men could defend it against all the world, the Knight told Froissart the following anecdote of the Count of Foix and the pretty town of Pamiers.

"'Strong as this pass is,' said the knight, 'the Count de Foix once forced it, and advanced even as far as Pamiers, but the English archers greatly assisted him in this conquest. The Count d'Armagnac and the Lord d'Albreth invaded the country of Foix with upwards of five hundred men, and advanced into those parts near Pamiers. It was in the beginning of August, when the corn was harvesting and the grapes ripe—in that year there was great abundance of both—Sir John d'Armagnac and his people were encamped before the town and castle of Saverdun, a short league distant from Pamiers: they made an attack on it, and sent word to Pamiers that if they did not pay a composition for their corn and wines, they would burn and destroy all. Those of Pamiers were afraid of waiting the event, as their lord was at too great a distance,

being then at Bearn, so that they thought it more prudent to pay the ransom, which was settled at five thousand francs, but they demanded a delay of fifteen days which was granted to them.

" 'The Count de Foix heard of all this, and by great haste, and sending to all parts for aid, he got into Pamiers through this difficult pass. Assistance came to him from several quarters, so that he found himself at the head of twelve hundred lances. He would have given battle without fail to Sir John d'Armagnac, if he had waited for it, but they retreated into the country of Comminges, leaving behind the money from Pamiers, as they had no time to stay for it.

" The Count de Foix, however, did not hold them quit, but claimed the ransom, as he said he deserved it, for he had come to their assistance, and to drive their enemies out of the country. He paid with it his men of arms, and remained there till the good people had harvested their corn, finished their vintage, and put all their effects in safety.'

" ' By my faith,' said I, to the knight, ' I have heard you with pleasure.'

"Thus discoursing, we passed near a castle called

La Bretite, and then another castle, called Bascelles, all in the county of Comminges."

We had a slight ascent after leaving Pamiers, and then, I believe, an unvarying flat all the way to Toulouse. We had the pleasure of looking back upon the noble mountains where we have enjoyed ourselves so much, and which in so many ways have given us pleasing recollections.

Saverdun, where we changed horses, is a very ancient place. Here was born, in 1489, the famous Gaston de Foix, who closed his short, but brilliant career at the battle of Ravenna, in 1512. Beyond Saverdun the rivers Ger and Ariège unite; they afterwards join the Garonne, which we crossed. The country, before we reached Toulouse, is broken into heights, covered with vines; but though well cultivated, is not very interesting.

*Toulouse, Tuesday.* — I am rather disappointed in the appearance of Toulouse, for I expected this ancient town, once the headquarters of poetry and the revived arts and sciences of the middle ages, would have a more romantic and poetic appearance. From this place, Count Raimond, immortalized by

Tasso, led his valiant subjects to the Holy Wars:

> Buona é la gente, e non può da piu dotta
> O da piu forte guida esser condotta . . .
> . . . . . .
> Ma il buon Raimondo ch' in età matura
> Parimente maturo avea il consiglio,
> E verdi ancor le forze a par di quanti
> Erano quivi, allor si trasse avanti. .
> . . . . . .
> Vivo specchio
> Del valor prisco ; in te la nostra gente
> Miri, e virtù n'apprenda : in te di Marte
> Splende l'onor, la disciplina, e l'arte.*

Toulouse is large, but approached from the side of Pamiers, has nothing striking about it. I thought the streets narrow and ill-paved, and the Place du Capitol not worthy of its reputation; however, it is to be improved. The Capitol itself is a fine building. We turned into the Rue Fayette, leading from it, and there found the Hotel Casset. Had it not been for M. de St. J——'s recommendation, I do not think we should have stayed, for it looked dirty, and the street is narrow and noisy; but Nos. 27 and 28, the rooms he recommended, were vacant, so we had no excuse. However, we afterwards got

* Gerusalemme, Canto 1—7.

more reconciled to our quarters, by the excellence of the dinner. Before it, we walked out, and saw the Capitol. The Salle des Illustres Toulousains is a rather shabby-looking hall, containing the busts of forty distinguished citizens; that of Louis XIV. is very justly placed at its extremity, for in creating the Canal du Midi, he, at all events, deserved well of Toulouse.

In the room of the council of the Jeux Floreaux is the statue of the illustrious Clemence Isaure—a fat, unpoetic-looking dame of fifty. She established, or some say, revived, those games in 1323. The inscription beneath the statue records that she established a fish and fruit market at Toulouse, on condition that the citizens should support the Jeux Floreaux. We saw the celebrated golden violets, given as prizes; and, in strange juxtaposition, close to the large and heavy kind of knife with which the Duc de Montmorency was executed, in the reign of Louis XIII.

Toulouse, the Tolosa of the Romans, improves on acquaintance, and, considering the hour at which this declaration is made, (five o'clock in the morning—waiting for departure,) by the light of a tallow candle, and after being awoke out of a sound sleep, I think it may

be believed. It is a large and fine town, containing many excellent houses, and many shops of a description announcing luxury and expense. The luxury of the mind, however, is little attended to, if we are to judge by the booksellers' shops, which, so far as we saw, are but poorly provided—rather an unexpected deficiency in a place of such ancient literary fame. The Rue de la Pomme, which runs out of the Place du Capitol, near the theatre, seems to have the best shops.

After seeing the Capitol, and in its Grande Salle, the portrait of Louis Philippe, where, according to report, the original dare not shew himself, we went to the church of St. Sermin. It is in the pure Norman style, and of considerable size; containing a splendid collection of relics, and consequently, is held in great respect. On Wednesday morning, at seven, we returned to the church, with the intention of ascending its fine octagon tower, but, unfortunately, the carilleur was nowhere to be found; we waited for some time in conversation with his tidy little old wife; but in vain. The formation of an open area round the church, which is in progress, will be a great improvement—several old streets have already disappeared,—at the corner of the place is still

the name of one of them, which is curious enough—" Rue des 13 Vents."

On our way to the church, we walked through the market for fruit and vegetables, held in the morning, in the Place du Capitol; an animated and interesting sight. An immense supply of bad peaches, poor-looking figs, and large baskets of black and green grapes, mixed, lay about in all directions, which have a rich and prosperous look in the eye of a northern. We came home by the Boulevard, where much new building is going on; passed through the Place de Fayette, which is regularly built. Here is the Hotel de l'Europe, which, to judge by outward appearance, is much superior to Madame Casset's, where the dinners, however, are very good. We had to-day, ten dishes, exclusive of soup and dessert: in the first course, quails and foie de canard; and in the second, ortolons and partridges—the former excellent.

In our walk after breakfast, we went to two or three book-shops, and then to the Cathedral, an unfinished building. The facade is unaccountably singular—the tower stands at one side, then there is a rosace, but over, neither the great door nor the window. I suppose

the original design was to have placed the tower between the parts of a great pediment. The choir is very fine, and the circular chapels at the eastern end, with the old stained glass, have a good effect.

We returned home, and soon after started to see some sights, in a kind of citadine, with two horses, the communicative driver serving as cicerone. On our way to the Canal du Midi, we passed the arsenal, a large enclosure, saw an inspection of cavalry; most of the men were dismounted; and heard, that the garrison here does not amount to more than five thousand men. We drove along the Canal de Brienne, which, so far as we could learn, is intended as a feeder to the great canal. At its junction with the basin, into which the great canal runs, there is a double bridge; and facing the embouchure, an allegorical bas-relief, now somewhat injured. Here, another canal is being dug, as the coachman said, to communicate with Bordeaux, probably to avoid the uncertainty of river navigation. We afterwards went to the embouchure, where the canal joins the Garonne; the junction is effected by two fine locks. It is altogether a noble work.

We then drove to see the obelisk, erected

on the height occupied by the French during the memorable battle on the 10th April, 1814. The position is so strong, that, defended as it was by a numerous artillery, it is wonderful that any number of troops could have succeeded in taking it. Though the French claim the victory; so far as the obelisk goes, nothing can be more modest; its inscription claims nothing. On one side of the base which supports the obelisk is inscribed, "Toulouse reconnaissante;" on another, "Aux braves, morts pour la patrie;" and on the third, "Bataille du 10 April, 1814;" the entrance door is on the fourth side. As to the disputed question of Soult's knowledge of peace being signed before the battle, I do not see it is material, since it was the Duke of Wellington who made the attack, and it could hardly be expected that, without a struggle, Soult would have abandoned such a position, which must have given him great hope of victory; nor can it be imagined that the Duke of Wellington knew that peace was signed; though it is curious enough that when Mathew wrote his "Diary of an Invalid," it was upon the Duke that the imputation of this useless battle was cast.

We drove home by the Jardin Royale, a planted walk—nothing remarkable, and having no view; that from the obelisk is very commanding, and in a clear morning in spring must be beautiful; to-day is misty, and the range of the Pyrenees but dimly perceptible; the town, spread below, with its churches and towers, looks very important; but now the country has the dry, burnt-up appearance of an almost concluded harvest.

In the evening, we went to the theatre to see "Lucia di Lammermoor;" and on our way, passed through the Place; it now exhibited a very gay appearance, being covered with "Two-sous-a-piece" shops, lighted up with paper lanterns.

The theatre is handsome, and the performance was good; but the crowd and heat were so great, that we remained only for the first act. The Toulousians are said to be *bien difficiles* in theatrical matters, and to-night a false note made by one of the singers was immediately hissed. An Italian tenor sang well—but in Italian; the rest of the performance being in French; a very plain actress sang very well also. We took refuge from the heat at a café,

where we enjoyed some ice, and then had a cool walk home by a brilliant moon.

*Friday. In the carriage, between Toulouse and Carcassone.* — The country is bare and ugly. There are, indeed, plenty of almond trees, but they are so thinly planted that they have but little effect; and the fields at a distance look like monstrous pieces of old brown thread-bare cloth with all the nap off. A high scorching sirocco is blowing in our faces. This parching, glaring weather is only bearable in a dark room. How much more depressing to the spirits is the hopelessly hot sun and sirocco wind of southern climes, than any gloom of rainy or even foggy weather in the north. I wish persons who abuse our gloomy climate and cold east wind could be convinced of this, for it would make them better contented with poor dear England. The aspect of the country to-day put me in mind of Tennyson's description of Mariana in the South:

"With one black shadow at its feet,
The house through all the level shines,
Close-latticed to the brooding heat,
And silent in its dusty vines.
A faint blue ridge upon the right,
An empty river-bed before,
And shallows on a distant shore,
In glaring sand and inlets bright.

. . . . Without, the steady glare
Shrank the sick olive, sere and small,
The river bed was dusty-white,
And all the furnace of the light
Struck up against the blinding wall."

I felt how much harder her lot must have been than that of Mariana in the North, though Tennyson gives a most living, or rather dying, picture of the gloom in a moated house of our northern lands.

MARIANA IN THE MOATED GRANGE.

" With blackest moss the flower plots
Were thickly crusted, one and all,
The rusty nails fell from the knots
That held the peach to the garden wall.
The broken sheds look'd sad and strange,
Unlifted was the clinking latch ;
Weeded and worn the ancient thatch
Upon the lonely moated grange.

All day within the dreamy house,
The doors upon their hinges creak'd—
The blue fly sung i' the pane; the mouse
Behind the mouldering wainscot shriek'd,
Or from the crevice peer'd about;
Old faces glimmer'd through the doors,
Old footsteps trod the upper floors,
Old voices call'd her from without."

We started to-day at six o'clock, and reached Carcassone at three — the distance, ninety-five

kilometres. We stopped about twenty minutes at Riquet's monument; so we were eight hours and a half doing about sixty miles, rather more than seven miles the hour, including stops. The road near Toulouse is very fine and quite flat. In a short time, passed a house, which, at a distance, resembled a fine English seat, but on a near approach the likeness ceases. The road rises near Castelnaudary, but an inferior range of low hills probably intercepts the view of the Pyrenees; however, even if visible, we could not see them on this worse than cloudy day, for, though the sun shines, there is a thick haze, with a strong south-easterly wind.

Before reaching Castelnaudary, we came to an obelisk, placed on a commanding height not far from the road; the mound is partly artificial, and the rock on which the monument stands seems to have been in part brought for the purpose. The monument was erected to the celebrated engineer of the Canal du Midi: on the base of the obelisk, on one side, is the following inscription:—

"L'an 1825, le 2 du regne de Charles X, ce monument a été élevé à Pierre Paul de Riquet, Baron de Bon-repos, Auteur du Canal de deux mers en Languedoc, par ses descendants."

Then follow the names of eleven of the Caraman family, some of Cambons, Barons de Bon-repos Avessons, and Airzard. On the opposite side is simply the name, "Paul de Riquet." The canal was begun in 1666, and finished in 1681. Riquet died two or three years before its completion; it is said to have cost 17,000,000 livres, and is 239,507 metres long, (about 159 English miles.) At Castelnaudary, I went to see a basin of great extent, which serves as a harbour for the boats when the canal is being cleaned.

The country became bare and more destitute of trees as we approached Carcassone; but the old town itself is picturesque. We first drove to the Hotel Bonnet; finding it full, we went to the Angel, which, though looking anything but an angel of light, turned out tolerably good—at least, less bad than its exterior led us to expect.

*Friday evening, Carcassone.*—We walked up to the "cité," the old town, which is situated on a considerable height beyond the Faubourg, and now abandoned to the lower orders—probably from its difficult approach and want of water. It is very curious, surrounded by an irregular old wall, with towers partly ruined, but now in

some measure kept up. The church is very handsome, and has nothing to shew its participation in the decay with which it is surrounded. About a year ago, an interesting tomb was discovered here, which had been covered with rubbish, and is consequently in perfect preservation; it is that of a bishop: his figure, in full length, stands on the sarcophagus, on the sides of which is a bas relief representing a funeral procession, with a number of figures and ornaments; there is also an inscription, and the date 1266.

The modern town has the reputation of a "jolie ville;" but I do not see why. Its streets are regular, but very narrow; the "*place*" has some trees, rather scarce things, and a handsome fountain, adorned with a figure of Neptune, supported by sea-nymphs and dolphins. Carcassone was the Carcasso of the Romans: Cæsar says, "Multis viris fortibus Carcassone nominatim evocatis in exercitum introduxit." This certainly contradicts tradition, which gives a different origin to the name—a far more romantic one, and therefore, if not true, ought at least to be so. It is as follows:—

The ramparts of Carcassone are curious from

the antiquity of their construction, and the traditions which are attached to them. A singular one is connected with the tower which still exists near the gate of Narbonne. It appears that when Charlemagne besieged this place, it was defended by a Saracen woman named Carcas; she shewed herself in every direction—shooting an arrow from one place, hurling a javelin from another, and a stone from a third, so as to give the appearance of a numerous garrison; and, to induce the belief of an abundant supply of provisions, threw to the besiegers the body of a pig which had died from a surfeit of maize.

Charlemagne, discouraged by these appearances, was on the point of raising the siege, when the above-named tower made him a most profound bow. The emperor, struck by this extraordinary act of politeness, made another attack, and entered the town. Like a true knight, he caused the bust of the heroic defender to be placed on the wall, with the inscription "Carcas sum," (I am Carcas,) of which the present name, Carcassone, is a corruption. This rude but memorable piece of sculpture still exists, and was pointed out to us in the wall by our cicerone.

Edward the Black Prince laid siege to Car-

cassone in 1355, and "burnt the suburbs, but could do nothing to the town, as it was well defended. He then marched to Narbonne, burning and destroying the country."

*Saturday. In the carriage, between Carcassone and Narbonne.*—This day's journey was a very dismal one; the south-east wind brought with it a heavy leaden atmosphere, which made the dull, uninteresting country we travelled through, still more monotonous; luckily, the posting is excellent, and the road generally good, though undulating.

Before reaching Narbonne, we came to some rocky mountains, but no interest about them, all is dull and burnt up; withered vines, the only crop left, and that is fast disappearing, for the vintage, which now occupies all the world, has begun; met numbers of carts, carrying baskets full of grapes. Narbonne is a wretched-looking place; I can imagine, with the old French poet, that

> "Dans cette ville de Narbonne,
> Toujours il pleut, toujours il tonne."

Eighteen hundred years ago it was of considerable importance, and was chosen by Augustus as the

place of meeting for the states of Gaul. The sculptured marbles with which its walls are studded, attest former magnificence. These relics were thus placed by Francois I., to save them from destruction.

At Narbonne, the marriage of Atolphus, King of the Visigoths, with the sister of the Emperor Honorius, took place. It is said that the royal barbarian, proud and happy at such an alliance, placed at the feet of his beautiful bride a hundred vases, full of gold, pearls, and precious stones.

The first Christian Bishop of Narbonne was Sergius Paulus, who is described in the Acts of the Apostles as "Sergius Paulus, a prudent man: who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God;" and it appears that he did not send for them in vain, for we read in the 12th verse of the 13th chapter, that "Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord."

The church of Narbonne, though consisting only of what was originally intended for the choir, is beautiful; the altar has six splendid pillars of Languedoc marble: it is of great height,

and has some fine windows of old stained glass. The original idea was grand; it is now being partially carried out, and a chancel is being built.

We have just spent a fatiguing hour at Narbonne, in the midst of all its dirt and smells: and now the view begins to improve. Behind us is a good prospect of the Eastern Pyrenees, with the noble Canigou towering far above its companions: on our right, the blue Mediterranean forms a fine boundary to the vine-clad plain towards the south, and in front of us, to the west, are the undulating heights near Beziers. But it is much too hot to write; besides, I often think of Milnes' lines:—

"Try not, or murmur not if tried in vain,
In fair rememberable words to set
Each scene or presence of especial gain,
As hoarded gems in precious cabinet.
Simply enjoy the present loveliness;—
Let it become a portion of your being;
Close your glad gaze, but see it none the less,
No clearer with your eye, than spirit seeing;
And, when you part at last, turn once again,
Swearing that beauty shall be unforgot;
So in far sorrows it shall ease your pain,
In distant struggles it shall calm your strife,
And in your further and serener life,
Who says that it shall be remember'd not?"

I have found that if a scene does not make a sufficiently vivid impression to be always remembered, even our own description, however glowing it may be, and though written at the moment, will not afterwards bring the scene strongly to the mind. The description may indeed excite pleasant feelings, and we shall see *something* before us, but it will not be the place itself.

*Beziers: evening.*—We had a sharp ascent to reach this town, which stands on a considerable height. The hotel we stopped at proved very disappointing; it appeared the best, but turned out to be a bad one; its enormous landlord, who looks like a Jew, asked, in the first instance, fifteen francs for our rooms, and then lowered his price to eight. We heard afterwards, from good authority, that the Hotel du Nord is very comfortable.

We are now in the Department de l'Herault, and by a narrow bridge crossed the Orbe to reach the town; a new bridge is being constructed. On the promenade is a fine, but rather extravagant, bronze statue of Riquet.

The sirocco continues its blighting influence, the heavy atmosphere looks as if it would rain

every moment, but no rain comes: we had a few tantalizing drops to-day. As we went this morning to see the church—formerly, I believe, the cathedral of Beziers—we had an opportunity of observing that its narrow streets are the dirtiest I ever saw; filth is everywhere—even the entrance to the church is not respected.

The church is a fine one, but without aisles; the great altar occupies the entire of the semicircular east end, and is rich in Languedoc marble, having fifteen or sixteen pillars inferior in size and beauty to those of Narbonne, but of the same description.

We returned by the "Place," still called, "de la Citadelle," though it no longer exists. This is a fair day; quantities of sheep were assembled as the market of Beziers is celebrated. In clear weather, the view from the terrace near the church must be very fine. We were pointed out the position of the seven locks of the canal, said to be worth seeing; but it is about a quarter of an hour's walk from the town—too long a one for our limited time in this depressing weather.

In the year 1399, Charles VI. of France came to Beziers, and his visit there, with the fêtes it occasioned, are well described by Froissart. He

says—"When the king had, for fifteen days and more, taken his amusements with the ladies and damsels of Montpelier, and his ministers, during that time, had attended to the state of the town, for that had been the cause of his coming, and he had made many reforms, and taken off several heavy taxes of which the inhabitants had complained, he graciously took his leave of the ladies, and one morning, very early, departed, following the road to Alipiam, where he dined, and lay that night at St. Thibery. On the morrow, after his morning draught, he set off and came to Beziers, where he was received most joyfully, for the good people of that town and the adjoining ones were anxious to see him, in order to make their complaints against an officer of the Duke of Berry, called Bethisac, who had impoverished the country all around by seizing whatever he could lay his hands on."

The King of France was met at Beziers by the bishop and all the clergy in their robes, and the citizens, ladies, and damsels in procession: they formed a lane, through which he rode a foot's pace; and as he passed, they all fell on their knees. In this manner was he conducted to the cathedral, and dismounted at the portico, where

a rich altar had been erected, adorned with holy relics from the church.

After having made his devotions, he went to the palace that was adjoining, where he and his brother and uncle were lodged. "The King was three days revelling with the ladies and damsels of Beziers," before any notice was taken of the suspected Bethisac; but the inquisitors who had been appointed to make inquiries concerning him were not idle, but did their office secretly, and discovered many atrocious acts deserving the severest punishment.

But on inquiry, it was found that although Bethisac had impoverished and extorted great sums of money unjustly from the people, he had not kept any for himself, but given every farthing to his covetous master, the Duke of Berry. He was then at first acquitted, but the people were not satisfied, and resolved that the poor servant should be punished for the faults of his master.

In consequence, Bethisac was remanded before the council, and again more closely examined; yet still he would probably have been acquitted, had not his enemies devised a cruel plot for his destruction. Seeing that the law was now in his favour, and that secular power could not

prevail against him, they determined to make him offend the clergy.

Some persons visited his prison at night, and frightened him, by saying, that he could not possibly escape the King's anger; at the same time, they advised that he should confess that he had erred from the faith, and was a heretic.

"Keep steady to this declaration," they said; "for the Bishop of Beziers, when he hears this, will claim you to be given up to him. This will be instantly complied with, and you will be sent to Avignon, when no one will venture to accuse you in opposition to the Duke of Berry, whom the Pope dare not anger."

Bethisac unfortunately believed all this false information; and, in the morning, he sent for the inquisitors, and confessed that he did not believe in the resurrection. These men, overjoyed that he had now fallen into their net, hastened to the King, and reported what Bethisac had declared. He was much astonished; and said, "We order him to be put to death! He is a wicked wretch—a heretic and thief. We will, that he be burnt and hanged, that he may have the reward he deserves; nor, for anything my uncle of Berry can say, will I pardon him." Be-

thisac was then hurried to the square before the palace, where, to his horror, he saw a fire already lighted, and a gallows near it.

In vain he demanded to be heard: much haste was made, and he was fastened to the stake. They then covered him with dry fagots, to which they set fire. And thus was Bethisac burnt, and his bones hanged immediately in front of the King's apartments.

## CHAPTER XX.

Montpellier—Disappointment—Pictures and curiosities—Maison de detension centrale.

*Montpellier, October 1st.*—From Beziers we took the lower road, and had more trees and verdure than we have seen for some time. The canal was on our right; it joins the sea near Agde, a small dirty place, with a suspension bridge over the Herault. The circular basin of the canal, and the passage of a torrent, called Libron, through the canal, are said to be fine works.

The country continues devoted to vines: the produce must be enormous. After Agde, we passed round a large village, Marseillan, and saw the position of Cette, under a hill at the extremity of a tongue of land running into the sea. Cette is famous for its wine manufactories, where

wines of every description are imitated. The Mediterranean, as its shores here are flat, does not appear to advantage. The same kind of scenery continued, its chief object of interest being the town of Frontignac, so famous for its wine. Contrary to our expectation, we had no ascent to reach Montpellier: we could not get rooms at the Hotel du Midi, but found excellent accommodation at the Hotel de Londres.

Here we have southern suns and southern fruit, &c.—but where — oh, where are those charms of the south, people rave about? I neither see nor feel any of them: no flowers, no luxuries, such a contrast to the north of Germany, where every house, or even cottage, has its balcony of choice flowers. In this attraction, even gentlemen's houses are deficient. For the last few days the weather has been so *suffocatingly* hot we could scarcely bear any clothes on; last night it suddenly changed, and obliged us to put four times the quantity of bed clothes, and even then I awoke shivering. Is this in reality the far-famed Montpellier, whose name is connected in our northern minds with all that is beautiful, soothing, and cheerful? Oh, how much less pleasant is the original than all

those lovely nooks and sunny slopes which bear the name of Montpellier, in dear England. The glare and dazzle from white walls and roofs put me in mind of Brighton, but the air is not so pleasant nor invigorating as that of our famous bathing-place.

After breakfast, yesterday, we took a walk. The Grande Rue, though a narrow street, is a good one, cleanly kept, with many excellent houses, but the boulevards outside the old town is the part which is coming into vogue. The esplanade opposite the citadel is a fine walk. Mr. G—— called whilst we were out, to take us to the French Protestant Church: there are about 1800 protestants at Montpellier, and three clergymen, who disagree personally, and in doctrine; and of course the result is, that their flock is diminishing.

We dined to-day with Colonel W——, and met an intelligent Frenchman, M. L——, with whom we had some interesting conversation. It seems that the idea of perfect equality as to inheritance is now, since 1830, so rooted in the minds of the people, that it extends to everything, and great jealousy is excited, if, during his life time, a parent does not observe towards

his children the same principle even in his presents.

*Tuesday.*—We visited to-day the Maison de Detension Centrale pour les Femmes, for which M. L—— had given us an order, and which is not easy to obtain. It is a fine establishment, destined for the female criminals of the neighbouring departments, who are condemned to imprisonment for a period exceeding a year: 488 are now there. The strictest silence is always observed, and punishment ensues if one prisoner be detected speaking to another. It is under the care of a director; but the details of the management are confided to nineteen Sœurs de la Société de St. Joseph. Several of them are very nice-looking young women, rather coquettish in their costume, which is very becoming; under the black capulet is one of light blue, the effect of which is very pretty.

All the prisoners are kept at work, weaving silk, making stockings and night-caps by machinery, carding, spinning, &c. The wool is entirely prepared in the house: in one ward the prisoners were removing it from the skins. A sister presides in each ward. The whole is kept in excellent order, and the prisoners were particularly clean.

As well as I understood, they are fed by contract, and the contractor disposes of the manufactures; one-fifth goes to him, and of the remaining four-fifths, one-third is for the benefit of the prisoners; each receives a small sum for present use, and the rest is put by to each individual's account, and *la masse* given on the expiration of the term of imprisonment: the two-thirds of the four-fifths go to the benefit of the establishment.

I spoke to several of the sisters, all of them very pleasing, and of mild and gentle manners: what a deep feeling of duty must be theirs, to enable them to support the *ennui* of such a life! How I pitied one young woman, whose class was carding wool in a close, dusty atmosphere; the monotony of the work the only sound to break the gloomy silence.

There is a school attached to the establishment, where the well-behaved criminals, by permission of the inspector, are permitted to attend. Between sixty and seventy are now in attendance. A sister told me that they hoped some who returned into society were improved in conduct; they had only two cases of former inmates sent back for fresh crimes. Mdlle. Grouvelle, who

conspired against the life of Louis Philippe, is a state prisoner here. She is willingly a strict observer of the rules of the establishment, as she never speaks to any one, and sees no one, not even the clergyman; she was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, two of which have expired.*

We went from the prison to the Botanic Garden, which is a celebrated one, and contains the tomb of Narcissa, the daughter of Young, the poet. A lotus is here in bloom, the first of the kind which has bloomed in France; it bears a flower of a deep rose colour. The greenhouse is too low for many of the loftier exotics, but it has a fine specimen of the catchouc plant and the banana. The tomb of Narcissa is in a recess of the wall, and has the following beautiful inscription — "Placandis Narcissæ manibus." Christian burial was denied because she was a heretic; the mob surrounded the house, and demanded the body, that they might throw it into a ditch. At night the unfortunate father carried her forth in his arms, and placed the body in the wall, where it remained undisturbed.

* Since we visited the establishment, the famous Madame Laffarge has been imprisoned here.

Young brought his daughter here for the benefit of her health. He says—

"Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight;
And on her cheek, the residence of spring,
Pale Omen sat; and scatter'd fears around
On all that saw, (and who would cease to gaze
That once had seen?) With haste, parental haste,
I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid north,
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
And bore her nearer to the sun: the sun
(As if the sun could envy) check'd his beam,
Denied its wonted succour; nor with more
Regret beheld her drooping than the bells
Of lilies; fairest lilies, not so fair!"

She soon died, and Young says of Death—

"It call'd Narcissa long before her hour:
It call'd her tender soul by break of bliss,
From the first blossom, from the buds of joy;
Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves
In this inclement clime of human life."

The difficulty he experienced from the bigotry of the population is touchingly expressed in Night the Third. He says:—

"More like her murderer than friend, I crept
With soft suspended step, and, muffled deep
In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.
I whisper'd what should echo through their realms:
Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies."

The report current here is that an "English prince," about twenty or thirty years ago, placed the stone, with the appropriate inscription.

Mr. G—— discovered the author. Being at a dinner party, he accidentally spoke of the beauty of the inscription: M. Candolle, the celebrated botanist, was of the party. Mr. G—— observed he blushed, and this led to the discovery that he was the author. But dull matter-of-fact has sadly interfered with all the romance of this story. Mr. G—— read lately in a Lyons paper, that Narcissa died at Lyons, and that the registry of her interment was recently found among the documents of a church there.

During our walk, saw two fine staircases, one of them particularly so, of the time of Louis XIV., the work of Paghul; the ornaments very rich. There are several fine houses here: the one where the states of Languedoc used to assemble is now let out to different persons.

We went home at four to dinner, and immediately afterwards walked up to the Pieron to see the view. Disappointed as to the distant mountains; but the home view, thickly studded with white villas, has a rich and prosperous

effect. Scarcely a shopkeeper of Montpellier but has a country house.

There is a triumphal arch opposite the entrance to the Pieron, which, strange to say, is united to the shabby houses adjoining. On it is the following inscription :—

> Ludovico magno LXX annos regnante
> Dissociatis repressis conciliatis gentibus
> Quatuor decennali bello conjuratis
> Pax terra marique parta, 1715.

The Pieron is a noble walk. The aqueduct, which is worthy of Rome, and the Chateau d'Eau, combine well; the whole is on a majestic scale.

I forgot to say, that after our return from the Maison de Detension, we went to see the pictures of the Marquis of Montcalm; a name well-known in the history of Languedoc, as a leader during the religious wars; an ancestor of the present Marquis commanded the French at the battle of Quebec. The house we visited is a modern one; it has been built but a few years; it is pretty and comfortable; the collection of pictures good. There is a beautiful Greuze—a young girl pulling the leaves of a flower, and endeavouring to ascertain by this means if her lover is thinking of her. The picture tells a

whole story of character; such innocence and modest repose, a sort of assumed indifference too,—as if delicacy prevented her from being flurried—as if she would scarcely confess to herself what she was doing or thinking of, much less pronounce the adored name. We admired a St. Joseph, or Jerome, with an infant in his arms, by Guido. Two Salvator Rosas; one a battle-piece of great spirit. In the adoration of the Shepherds by Philip de Champagne, the light proceeding from the child is well managed, and some of the figures are very good; but it struck us that there is a sad want of dignity about the infant.

We then went to the Museum, which contains many good things—particularly Mr. Faber's collection, which he inherited from the Countess d'Albany. We had scarcely time to see half the collection, when the hour of closing (three o'clock) arrived.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Journey to Nismes—La Maison Carrée—Interesting Poet.

*Nismes, Friday* 21*st.*—We started from Montpellier at half-past seven, and reached Nismes at twelve. The scenery is "weary" and "flat," but not "unprofitable," for it produces vines in every direction. We changed horses at Lunel—a flourishing little town, celebrated for its wine. We bought a bottle of its vin de Muscat for three francs, and found it not amiss at our breakfast, en voiture, on bread and grapes.

Nismes is, in many points of view, a most interesting town; in its greatness, under the Romans, to which its magnificent ruins, or rather remains, bear testimony (for the Maison Carrée can scarcely be called a ruin)—in the singular history of its religious wars, and in its present state.

It is a handsome and improving town. The new Palais de Justice, &c., will be a beautiful building, in excellent taste; and the new street, terminating with the Maison Carrée, is well-built. The Boulevard de la Madelaine, with the fine hospital for old men and women on one side, shaded by four rows of trees, is very handsome. The amphitheatre is finely thrown open, and few public buildings are so well placed as the Maison Carrée. Nothing now, since the removal of some old houses, interferes, and it is highly ornamental.

As soon as we were installed in an apartment at the Hotel Luxembourg, which, to our surprise (so far as rooms go) is excellent, though the living is inferior and dear, we issued forth to see the sights. In driving to the hotel, which is on the esplanade, we passed by the amphitheatre, and it was our first object.

"Reste d'un vieux géant, débris dont la stature
Du Nîmes d'autrefois peut offrir la mesure."

REBOUL.

As I have already said, it is very well-placed, in an extensive area, which it must have been difficult and expensive to create. I think it once itself teemed with population, every arch had its

occupants; so that from a feeling of pity to them, Francis I. recalled the order for their removal; now it stands "alone in its glory," not an inhabitant, except the concierge, to interfere with the solemnity of the scene.

It gives, indeed, an idea of the colossal greatness of the Roman power, which could, at this distant part of its empire, create so stupendous a work. Considering the attempts made to destroy it, and the neglect to which it has been for ages exposed, it is wonderful as to preservation. It consisted of two stories—the lower range of arches, sixty in number, is perfect; part of the second story, towards the south, has been destroyed; the remaining arches of the second story are not only perfect, but so is the attic which surmounts them, and on which are the projecting stones, with holes in them, to support the poles of the velaria.

The pilasters are of the Doric order. It had thirty-five rows of seats, and could contain nearly 24,000 spectators—on the seats, the space for each spectator is marked. The principal diameter is 405 feet long, the less 317, the circumference 1140, and the height 66. Many of the seats, particularly towards the south, have been

destroyed, and in no part are they perfect, from the top to the bottom.

It is said, that owing to the lowness of the podium, which is only eight feet two inches in height, this amphitheatre could not have been used for combats of wild beasts ; still in the excavations which took place in 1822 and 1823, the tusks of wild boars, and the teeth of elephants were found; and the canals for conducting water, shew that sea-fights took place here.

"Arène où s'égorgeaient le Gaulois et le Thrace,
Contents d'être applaudis avant que de mourir,
Devant ce peuple-roi qui voulait qu'avec grâce
On rendît le dernier soupir."

REBOUL.

This is still used as the scene for athletic exhibitions. On Sundays, there are wrestling matches, which are so attractive, that they are announced by bills; those for the sports of Sunday next are already 'affichés.' Bull-fights took place here, but they are now discontinued. Reboul told us that the effect of the crowd occupying every part of the interior, and especially their shouts, is very grand.

This amphitheatre was built by Titus in the year 82. It is surprising how it has remained so

entire. In the irruptions of the barbarians it was converted into a fortress. In 737, Charles Martel, who had been more than once obliged to take it from the Saracens, endeavoured to destroy it, by filling it with wood, which was afterwards ignited. The stones were in many parts calcined, but the heat did not blow up the passages as he intended. Some of the passages have been restored, so that the approach to the upper seats is now made very easy, and the view from them, of the interior, is very fine.

At one period, the amphitheatre was independent of Nismes, and had its own magistrates; and even in 1809, it contained 2000 inhabitants. Napoleon ordered the demolition of the habitations, which was finished in 1812; and in 1822 the ruins were cleared out, and the repairs begun.

From it we went to the Maison Carrée, now standing in the handsome "place," of which the theatre, with its fine portico, forms one side. The preservation of this monument is wonderful; M. Perrot, the concierge, says that it is the best preserved existing. All the acanthus leaves of the capitals are perfect; whereas in the Pantheon at Rome, there is only one. Its length is ninety-

five feet two and a half inches, the breadth forty-four feet nine inches, and its height fifty-five feet. The interior of the building now devoted to a museum is forty-eight feet long, thirty-six feet wide, and of the same height—thirty-six feet. It has thirty columns, twenty-eight feet and a half high, (ten diameters and a half;) they are of the Corinthian order, fluted and very beautiful; the capitals are quite perfect, both for workmanship and preservation.

The building stands on a platform, eleven feet high; and a flight of fifteen steps leads to the portico, which has twelve columns, six in front, and four on each side, including the corner ones—thus reckoned twice over. The building has eleven columns on the sides, and six in front; of those on the side, seven are for half their diameter in the wall. A beautiful frieze goes all round the building, except the façade, where was an inscription in bronze. This was removed, but by means of the holes in the stones, and the stains remaining, a good guess has been made of its import. This has been the subject of much antiquarian discussion. M. Sequier traced it accurately so long ago as 1758, and published his version, with which

M. Perrot coincides. According to them, it was as follows :—

C. Cæsari. Augusti F. Cos. L. Cæsari. Augusti F. Cos Designato. Principibus Juventutis.*

Being erected in honour of Caius and Lucius Cæsar, by their father, Marcus Agrippa, in the reign of Augustus, eighteen years before Christ, they being the adopted sons and intended successors of Augustus.

It stood in the centre of a magnificent forum, and in the excavations the position of the bases of three of the columns of the forum were found in their position; the remains of an entablature shew that this was a fine portico, of the same dimensions, as to the height of the columns, &c., as the Maison Carrée, but on a lower level, standing also on a platform, raised above the level of the street, from which it was approached by flights of five steps. Many remains, found in removing the old houses, are now ranged within the enclosure of the Maison Carrée.

Its destination has been curiously varied: originally, as I have said, a heathen temple, it became, in 345, a church of the early Christians,

* To Caius Cæsar, the son of Augustus, Consul: To Lucius Cæsar, the son of Augustus, Consul elect: The Princes of the Youth.

who destroyed the forum. After the Moorish invasion it became a mosque, but Charles Martel, in 727, restored it to the church; in 1050, it was l'Hotel de Ville; and remained so to 1540, when it was exchanged for a piece of ground for a new Hotel de Ville, and the Marquis de St. Chaptes bought and converted it into a stable. In 1670, the order of St. Augustin made a chapel of it, and held it until the revolution of 1789; the clubs of 92 and 93 held their sittings here, and in 1815, it was used as a kind of arsenal. In 1820, the excavations were commenced, and in 1824 it was opened as a museum.

Remains of antiquity in the centre of a town, however fine or splendid they may be, do not cause such pleasant feelings as much less perfect monuments in a beautiful country, or even in a flat and solitary desert. If the Maison Carrée and the amphitheatre here, had such a locale as the temples at Pœstum, their effect would be quite magical. So much is my foolish imagination influenced by surrounding accompaniments, that I was more interested and pleasantly impressed by the temple of Diana, and remains of Roman baths in the gardens here, though in themselves they are very imperfect and possess no features worthy of remark, than I was with that

most perfect monument of Roman art, the Maison Carrée.

The din and dirt of a dense population, the disagreeable sights and sounds of every day life that surround this celebrated temple, quite disturb and disenchant my mind; but when I mounted its steps, which, by the bye, are so steep that they do not give one any great idea of Roman luxury—when I walked round its beautiful portico—then, indeed, I began to wonder how all has been preserved through so many generations; and reflected on the poetic race that built a monument of such surpassing grace and beauty as to inspire admiration and consequent respect in so many races of barbarians, of conquerors and conquered. When I thought of all it had gone through during eighteen centuries of barbarism and neglect, I felt a sort of conviction that the immortal spirit which had created, still continued to hover near its beloved work to preserve it from sacrilege and ruin.

Some such dreamy thoughts as these occupied my mind as I gazed on this beautiful portico. We were then to enter the temple, I know not what my excited imagination did not expect—mystic altars, clouds of incense, processions of

radiant vestals, floated before me; but these bright visions were soon put to flight; they vanished before the dull reality of a modern museum. Though I knew all this before I entered, yet its realization grated against the feelings of the moment, and the many interesting objects the museum contains were lost upon me; even De Laroche's picture of Charles I. and Cromwell did not rouse me from my indifference. This fine representation of the usurper gazing on the coffined body of his murdered king, proved only to me that mankind had not much progressed since the days when the rites of pagan superstition occupied this place.

At the ruined and imperfect temple of Diana there is nothing to disturb the imagination from the contemplation of the mighty past. The only modern innovations are some wild fig-trees and vines that decorate the broken arches, and twine round the sacred altar. Enough remains of the old building, the circular cells where the oracles were delivered, the contrivance for conducting the voice into the statue, and the secret passages, to put one behind the scenes, and shew how the great goddess deluded her votaries. All this reality transports the mind direct into the olden

time—beautiful priestesses and admiring adorers stand before us in vivid distinctness; and we wonder what degree of faith they placed in a religion to whose mysteries they were privy, and whether those kneeling warriors adored with more fervour the marble statue of the goddess, or its fair attendants.

The baths, too, are full of interest, though a good deal spoilt by the modern superstructure of Louis XIV., in which some cross-legged Cupids and plump ladies, in affectedly strained attitudes, seem marvellously misplaced. Still, on descending to them, one steps with delight on the identical pavement, and wanders with pleasure through the very recesses where Roman beauty indulged in one of its highest gratifications. The feelings and thoughts thus produced take one out of self, with all its aches and cares, and constitute the great pleasure of travelling. What we want is, to be embodied, as it were, in the thing we admire. We look (though many without knowing it) for impressions—vivid and pleasant impressions—that may make us forget the present, and give us for the moment a new and far pleasanter sort of existence; therefore, however beautiful an object may be, if its situation or other

unharmonious causes prevent it from producing this impression, its effect is lost.

The amphitheatre, so well described by Reboul, and so magnificent in itself, is, I think, spoilt from being too "trimly dressed." No trees nor wild shrubs are allowed to appear, or encircle with their fond arms its ancient remains; and thus, though infinitely more perfect, it did not please me near so much as the mouldering walls and ruined arches of that at Poitiers. But, after all, I must confess the fault was in me rather than the building, for as an architectural specimen the amphitheatre is better as it now is; and how could the interior of the Maison Carrée be more properly made use of than as a museum for the remains of ancient art and modern painting?

I felt sure we should find good bread at Nismes, because its beautiful poet is a baker, and strange to say, we have not been disappointed, though M—— maintained that a good poet was likely to be a bad baker. Nowhere in the south of France have we met with such excellent bread, and after regaling on it at our comfortable tea (making a regular meal of tea is a luxury that falls to the lot of few mortals except washerwomen and maid-servants), we walked to see the celebrated poet.

We found him just sitting down in his shop to his evening meal, and he bore the interruption of a visit from persons he had never seen or heard of before, with considerable good humour. Yet I think this sort of interruption to persons who are obliged to labour for their daily bread, and whose short moment of repose is thus interfered with, must be indeed a great trial of temper. Reboul has a fine intellectual countenance and an air of greater refinement than seems to belong to his short tradesman's jacket. His dark, speaking eyes are surmounted by thick and arched eye-brows. A profusion of greyish hair grows rather low down upon his forehead. A sweet and benevolent expression plays about his mouth, and dimples the pale cheeks, which are rather sunk. He is well acquainted with Italian, and is now learning English, with the hope of being soon able to read Milton in the original tongue. He admires the "Paradise Lost" extremely, and says the style seems to him to resemble that of the old Italian poets. "But," said he, "it is very hard to judge, for in a translation, one is always derrière la tapisserie." He does not admire Shakspeare so much as his own Corneille; our great bard's mixture of tragic and comic scenes in the same piece, does not suit his taste.

After dinner we again walked in the gardens: a fine flight of steps leads to the terrace, which commands a good view, and from whence shady walks conduct to the Tourmagne,

"La tour qui s'élance aux célestes campagnes
Dont le hardi sommet est voisin des éclairs."

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It stands on a considerable elevation, and was originally about ninety-five feet high; it has now about three-quarters of its former height. Some antiquarians give it a great antiquity. Perrot concludes, from a piece of money, with the heads of Augustus and Agrippa, and the Crocodile on the reverse (the colonial medal of Nismes), that it cannot have a date before that time, and that it served for a watch tower; others think it was a mausoleum. It was an octagon building, and conical in form.

Good ladders have been placed inside, by which the approach to the top is made easy and secure. The view is very extensive, commanding, in fine weather, the distant mountains, the Alps, Mont Blanc, &c. It was interesting to trace the circuit of the walls of the old town, which was of great extent. The tower is a great mass of building; its most determined enemy was Charles Martel,

who nearly destroyed it, because it had been fortified by the Saracens; but Francis Trancat was a second Martel, as he received permission from Henry IV. to make excavations, in the expectation of finding treasure.

We were up this morning at a quarter past four. The drums of a regiment assembling to march awoke us, so we went out to have another look at the great monuments before our departure. Again mounted to the top of the amphitheatre, and measured one of the upper stones, which has the projection to receive one of the poles of the velaria, and found it more than seven feet long.

We saw the ornaments of the north entrance, and bought, as a memorial, a Roman coin of Nismes, a 'Col Nem,' with the Crocodile. We also went again to the Maison Carrée, and saw how unfair it is to judge of the effect of this building from its present state. It now looks bare without a peristyle, and the pilasters are poor; but we should recollect that it was built to stand in the centre of a fine forum, with a colonnade, above which the temple was raised. If it had a complete portico, the effect might have been heavy, particularly as behind, it was separated from the forum by a distance

of only twelve feet. We again walked round it, and in the museum, and having bought a few medals, hurried home to breakfast.

We have been reading lately many of the French Modern Poets, and are much pleased with some by St. Beuve, Milvoie, and Reboul. I find many English people have a great prejudice against modern French poetry. Yet, surely there is much beauty in it, particularly in the writings of De Lamartines and Victor Hugo. Indeed, I believe they have the same prejudice against English poetry of the present day; and this feeling is, perhaps, something analogous to that which induces the relations and intimate friends of an author at first to despise his writings. The writers of past centuries are removed far from all our jealous or envious feelings, and we also naturally and justly venerate what is old:

"Each goodly sign and mystic letter,
That angel-haunted books unfold,
We cherish more,—we know them better,
When we remember they are old;
And friends, though fresh, and hale, and cheerly,
And young, as annals hold,
Yet, if we prize them very dearly,
We love to call them old."

MILNES.

On the other hand, when this prejudice is once overcome, I believe modern books are the more interesting and amusing; and this arises not so much from their novelty, as because they are written to suit the taste of the age. The most popular writers are those who have discovered soonest any change in the public feeling, and written for it. These have all the benefit of apparent originality; they may not have found out a new path, but they have been the first to follow or accompany mankind on the new road.

Sometimes, indeed, the quick sight of a great genius sees beyond the present generation, and discovers the direction in which the human mind is going to travel, and precedes it in its course. He writes for this coming taste, and then it generally happens that his writings are not appreciated by his cotemporaries. And the higher the genius, the more likely is this to happen, because it sees the farthest, and is more quickly influenced by those often-hidden causes which impel our nature towards improvement.

## CHAPTER XXII.

Pont du Garde—Avignon—Its good Hotel and interesting Antiquities.

*Avignon, October 8th.*—We started at half-past nine from Nismes, and at the second relais, Lafoux, where there is a suspension bridge over the Garde, turned off the road, to visit the Pont du Garde, a detour, as charged, of nine kilometres. The Pont du Garde—

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"L'aqueduc qui nivelle et qui joint deux montagnes,
Et qui porte l'onde dans les airs"—

was originally an aqueduct for conveying the waters of two streams, near Uzes, to Nismes. This aqueduct, upwards of twenty-two miles long, was a splendid and useful work, for which the inhabitants of Nismes were indebted to Agrippa.

The River Garde here passes between rocks of some elevation, and about eight hundred feet distant from each other; and to carry the aqueduct across was the object. For this purpose three rows of arches were constructed; the lowest row consists of six arches and the second of eleven; which are so contrived, that five of them correspond with five of the first range, and thus have the same support; the third row has thirty-five arches, but they are only about eight feet high, and on them the aqueduct is placed. It is about four feet wide, and five high; the height of the entire is about a hundred and forty-six feet, and the length of the aqueduct eight hundred and nineteen. The effect from the bottom is very fine, but I should call it inferior to the aqueduct of Casserta. This is, however, a noble work; and, viewed from either side, but I think, particularly from the left bank of the river, very picturesque. The top of the aqueduct is covered with rough stones, of a single piece; we walked across it, though in some places the covering has given way. A good flight of steps makes the approach, on the northern side, easy.

The modern bridge has been cleverly constructed. It is formed by increasing the breadth

of the six lower arches so much, as to allow of a carriage road; it is then exactly of the same dimensions as the principal range of the aqueduct—is consequently a fine work, and I do not see why it should have excited the contempt of some tourists. The states of Languedoc decided, after much deliberation, on this method of making the communication across the river, and it appears they could not have done better.

We found an encampment of gipsies here,—the first I happen to have seen in France. Much wild lavender and other sweet-smelling herbs grow among the rocks, on the east side of the river. It now flows quietly under one arch only, but the extended bed shews that it can be in a passion. The fresh leaves of the mulberry-trees —their second crop—have a most refreshing effect, after those dusty green olives and withered vines, so long our companions.

We gradually ascended before we reached Avignon, and the first view we obtained of the majestic Rhone and the picturesque Avignon, in its fine position above the river, and of the rich, undulating vale rising into rugged heights at the horizon, is one of the loveliest I have seen. We saw it indeed to advantage; the river, sparkling

in sunshine, could be traced far away in its broad course towards the sea, occasionally overflowing into wide lakes. We afterwards found that much of the splendour of this effect was caused by a considerable flood, so much so as to give rise to fears for a repetition of the awful scenes of last year.

The old town wall of Avignon, with its towers, and the imposing, though irregular mass of the Pope's palace, are very striking. The Rhone here appears to me to be vastly wider than any river I have seen. It is divided by an island into two great streams, each of them now of greater breadth than the Rhine at Cologne. The Hotel de l'Europe, situated in the "*place*" close to the bridge, is a very good house, in which we have been fortunate to find excellent rooms.

Before dinner, we took a pleasant walk on the rocky height where is the old palace—now, alas! converted partly into a barrack, and partly into a prison. Higher up stands the cathedral, said to be one of the oldest churches in France, and on the summit of the height, which is quite precipitous on the river side, a promenade is now being constructed, commanding beautiful views on all sides.

The rocky Mount Ventoux is the striking mountain of the range we saw; but I dare say, in clear weather, Mont Blanc is visible. Avignon is the chief town of the department of Vaucluse; it was the Avenio of the Romans, and a celebrated colony; but Perrot says it existed many "centuries" before the Phocians from Marseilles established themselves here in 123. It came into the possession of the counts of Provence, and Joanna of Naples sold it to Clement VI. for eighty thousand gold florins, but there is a doubt if she were ever paid. In 1309 Clement V. transferred the apostolic chair to Avignon. Seven popes resided here until the last, Gregory XI., restored the seat to Rome, in 1378, and the papal legates resided here until the revolution of 1789. Petrarch, who lived under the pontificate of Innocent VI., called it "the Babylon of the West."

*October 9th.*—After breakfast, we took a walk in the Grande Rue, in which are some fine palaces, probably the remains of papal grandeur. The Hotel Calvet is now converted into a Museum for Natural History, and its garden into a botanic one; the collection of curiosities has been removed to the general museum, which we visited

on our return; it is now in confusion, as a new wing is being built.

M. Calvet left to the town not only his museum, but ten thousand francs a-year for the purchase of additions. We took a hurried view of it; among the antique remains I saw nothing of peculiar interest. Two elaborate tombs covered with ornaments, with a ram in the pediment of one, and a bust in the other, are of inferior style but well preserved; they were found at Vaison.

The picture-gallery has one end devoted to the Vernets, who, I believe, were natives of Avignon. Horace Vernet's Mazeppa is here *en double*—the first, intended for Avignon, just as it was finished, received a wound from a foil, during a fencing match; Vernet had it repaired, and sent to Avignon, and painted a *replica* to prevent disappointment; the town kept the two, to prevent any competition hereafter, as to originality. The Museum has a fine library, and collections of medals, bronzes, &c.

We afterwards walked to the Place, to look for maps; but, strange to say, we could not get one of the department maps of Les Bouches du Rhone. Near the "Place" is the "Tour de l'Horloge," a handsome Gothic building. The

theatre has a façade, decorated with columns and statues on the cornice. From it, is a "sweet" communication with the "Place du Chateau:" a rarity in the narrow and dirty streets of Avignon, as my poor nose can testify.

We went into the cathedral, which is undergoing extensive repairs and decorations, almost wholly, as I understood, at the expense of the bishop. The portico is very ancient; a chapel, now under repair, and the cupola, are of the time of Charlemagne; and a large slab, now in pieces, but which is to be restored, is said to have served for Pagan sacrifices. The tomb of Jean XXII. is a fine Gothic monument; but inferior in beauty to many we have in England: it is also to be restored. The tomb of Benoit XII. is the only other papal one the Revolution spared: the figure of the Pope pleased me much.

We again enjoyed the beautiful view from the intended promenade. The interesting old town of Villeneuve les Avignon looks very well on a height, at the opposite side of the river, now greatly swollen. Above Villeneuve are the extensive ruins of the Chateau de St. André.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

The ivory crucifix at Avignon—Unselfish zeal rewarded.

We started early this morning, our chief object being to see a famous ivory crucifix in the Eglise de la Misericorde. We went by the quay; the river is still high, and some water remains on the road; a man shewed us the mark left on a house by last year's awful inundation—it reached nearly to the ceiling of the rez-de-chaussée. We saw in our walk more of the wall, which, with its towers, adds so much to the picturesque appearance of Avignon. The wall is now, for the most part, masked at the lower part, with small houses and sheds, and many of the old gates are closed. We had to walk some distance before we came to a gate, and after traversing some narrow and winding streets, reached the church, which was the object of our search.

It belongs, I believe, to a religious society, called "Les Penitents Noirs," is rich in gilding, and has many pictures, said to be good; but it was so dark we could not well see them. Les Sœurs de la Charité—those admirable women—have charge of the church and of the adjoining lunatic asylum. One of them shewed us the crucifix, which is kept under lock and key, in the sacristy. It is finely executed: the figure of our Saviour on the cross is, with the exception of the arms, in one piece of ivory, twenty-six inches long. It is sculptured with great anatomical accuracy: beneath the feet is a death's head, and above, on a scroll, also in ivory, a "superscription is written over him, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew," "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." In one of the folds of the drapery is the name of the artist, "J. Guillermin, inventit et sculpsit, 1539."

The "sister" who accompanied us, confirmed the anecdote we had heard connected with this crucifix. The story is so interesting, that I think it worth relating. In order to understand it, I must ask you to transport yourself, in imagination, so far back as the sixteenth century, and place yourself in a homely but pic-

turesque room, with an oriel window that looks upon a little garden near the western rampart. In this room, an old man is carving a Madonna in ivory, whilst his nephew, a handsome youth of nineteen, is near him, occupied with a masterly sketch that promises to become a beautiful picture.

Pierre Guillermin and his nephew were both at work, but the degree of energy bestowed by each on their employment was very different. The uncle, though feeble with age and much bodily infirmity, pursued his task with great vigour, seldom lifting his eyes from the Madonna and child, which were fast increasing in loveliness under his busy fingers,—except that now and then he cast an impatient glance towards the window, as the sun-beams, which first shone upon his work, became higher and higher, and left the figure in comparative darkness. The young man, too, looked impatiently towards the window, but with a very different expression on his speaking countenance,—and, at last, throwing down his brush, he muttered—" I can work no longer."

The old man turned round, and gazed on him with a look of deep sorrow. " Do not lose the last few moments of light," said he, in a gentle, yet half-reproachful tone—" your picture is so

nearly finished, and you are always sure of finding a purchaser, whereas I, alas! often toil in vain, for there are so few who care for sculptured ivory."

"Where is the use of selling all the pictures in the world?" exclaimed the young man. "Nothing can obtain the consent of her parents, they will never give her to a poor artist."

"Say not so, my dear boy!—but how strange it is that an old, worn-out man like me should attempt to teach a handsome youth like you to hope. I have told you again and again it is not to your profession the parents of Elise object. If only 4000 ducats could be obtained, they would gladly consent to the marriage. Oh, if I had your youth, and strength, and talent, the money should not be long wanting!"

"Or I your steady perseverance, dearest uncle!" said Adolph, approaching him with a softened and contrite air. "Fool!—wretch that I am! will nothing conquer this dreadful sloth—this foolish horror I have of being shut up in a close room, when the birds are singing on yonder ramparts, and where——"

"And where you think Elise is taking her evening promenade!—well, well! I cannot blame

you for loving her sweet presence better even than that almost living image of her you have transferred to the canvas. Well, go your ways. I see your heart is on the rampart walk. Go, and leave your old uncle, who is fit for nothing better, to work as long as daylight lasts. Bless thee, my child, and may God grant all your wishes," said the old man, as Adolph, seizing his hat with the energy of a school-boy who has just escaped from an irksome lesson, bounded out of the room. "I should have been the same at his age," thought the old man, as with a sorrowful, yet resigned look, he sat down to his work. "And yet I had hoped his love for that beautiful girl would have given steadiness to his talent." And the old man thought over his nephew's character, till the painful conviction was forced on his mind that he would *not* have acted thus, even at the giddy age of twenty.

"But, then, I was not a genius," added he, as with a look of exultation he gazed on the masterly picture that lay, half-finished, on his nephew's easel. "Besides, I was obliged to labour for my bread—to plod away night and day: whereas, Heaven be praised! my dear sister Marie's child has an old uncle, whose only object is to make

him happy," and the old man continued to work with redoubled vigour. But when the shades of evening began to darken the room, and he felt it was impossible to continue any longer, a more desponding train of thought saddened his mind, and some misgivings came across him as to whether the course of indulgence he had always pursued towards the dear boy a dying sister had confided to his care, was quite right. "If I were to die now," thought he, "the boy would be ruined. I have fostered his taste for splendour, and never denied his slightest wish, because I always saw his talents were so transcendent as to secure to him an independent fortune."

"But, alas! it is not so. I have spent all—all, upon his, perhaps foolish, wishes, and now he has not steadiness to work, and I am growing almost too old. I shall soon be able to do no more for him." And old Guillermin wrung his hands with grief. "And yet, if he were once married, Elise is so good, so sensible, her example, and the pride of being her sole protector, would surely call forth all his energy, and ensure his industry. Oh! if my trade were as lucrative as his!—if I could find a purchaser for this Madonna, as I did for the St. Cecilia, when Adolph

incurred that gambling debt—and my St. Antonio half-finished too! If I could terminate both before the Pope's nuncio passes through Avignon, on his way to Paris, who knows but he might be tempted to give 200 crowns for them; then, with the large figure of our Lord, which I hope to sell for the church of St. Sulpice, the sum would be almost made up. And then—and then!" exclaimed the old man, rubbing his hands, while visions of his nephew's joyous nuptials, and a whole futurity of bliss for the young people, were conjured up in old Guillermin's still sanguine and almost youthful imagination. And he went to rest, determining to be up before daybreak, and work with renewed vigour.

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In the meantime, Adolph pursued his way to the promenade, but Elise was not there. In vain he walked up and down, and gazed upon the lovely view, till the forms of the distant mountains became almost blended with the evening sky. She came not. It was getting dark; and, angry with himself and annoyed with her for having caused him to lose the last hour of daylight to no purpose, he resolved to seek Elise, and re-

proach her for having caused him so great a disappointment.

"Something must and shall be decided," muttered Adolph; "it is impossible to exist in this state of uncertainty," he continued, as, with the pettishness of an ill-regulated mind, he reasoned and argued, as many of us do, that if only such and such particular circumstances would but occur, we should never murmur again, and nothing would ever tempt us to sin any more.

Most of us have experienced something of this sort, and though we may have attained the object of our desire, yet we are often wofully disappointed in the salutary influence we expected its attainment would have exercised on our minds. On the other hand, when success has crowned our own steady and persevering exertions, unassisted by any adventitious aid arising from chance, or the partiality or kindness of others, we feel blest in the fulfilment of our wishes; but the satisfaction is not so much in the attainment as in the happy state of mind which is created by a long course of perseverance, and by the daily self-denial of those inmost wishes which must be sacrificed to obtain a great end. The last truth we learn here below is the simple one that all

happiness depends solely upon the state of our own minds, and is totally independent of any outward circumstances.

Certainly the young and thoughtless Adolph had not learned this important truism; for with all the impetuosity of a spoilt and wayward disposition, and with a full conviction he never could be either happy or good unless Elise consented to become his wife, he hurried to her abode, though he had often vowed, when experiencing the cold treatment of her parents, that nothing should ever induce him to approach it again.

He went, but was not admitted.

"So you have wooed the lovely Elise in vain!" said a voice in his ear, as, with a gesture of angry impatience, he turned from her dwelling. "Well, do not look so desponding, there are other fair ones in Avignon. Come, cheer up, and try your luck at play, who knows but Mercury may prove more propitious than Cupid. Come, here are Louis and Charles, and you will just make the fourth."

Adolph hesitated at first, but was soon persuaded to join the party.

"It is all her fault," thought Adolph, or rather, he tried to think so, for there is always an inner voice that tells us the real right and wrong,

however we may try to stifle its admonitions. Adolph felt he was doing wrong in acceding to the tempting proposal of the dissipated young Robert, who had often before led him into scrapes; but he threw all the blame on the adverse fate which, by depriving him of Elise, seemed to extinguish every virtuous feeling. He played, and gained at first; he then lost a little, but instead of desisting, he continued to play, and the dawn of day found him still at the table.

At last he returned home, after having lost a considerable sum; and, far too tired to make use of the now bright daylight in his studio, he threw himself on his bed, and sank into a troubled and feverish sleep.

Long before Adolph had returned home, old Guillermin was at his work, happily unconscious of the manner in which his nephew had passed the night. It is astonishing what a strong will, what a powerful, and above all, a noble motive, can effect. The ardent desire to see his dear nephew happily married, seemed to instil fresh vigour into the old man's arm, and never, in his young days, did he achieve such a triumph as his beautiful group of the Madonna and child.

But the masterly sketches which surrounded the room were neglected. Adolph worked but feebly, and seemed possessed by a sullen and desponding melancholy. "The poor boy is pining," thought his kind uncle; and as the young man's efforts became more feeble, those of Guillermin redoubled; and yet, a few days before the expected arrival of the Pope's legate, old Guillermin's strength seemed suddenly to fail. His anxiety had been so great, that he allowed himself scarcely any time for rest, but had toiled through several nights by candle light, much to the injury of his valuable sight.

Adolph, though he could not fail to see that his dear uncle was fast sinking under his excessive labour, was so absorbed in his own sullen and helpless grief that he took no notice of all these exertions. Such occurrences are not rare. A mother, a devoted wife, or child, may consume their days in efforts for the advantage of a beloved object, and the indifference, or even ingratitude of that adored being does not diminish either their efforts or affection, and then these zealous and unselfish efforts are generally blessed —at all events, the one who loves finds in this strong affection a reward.

"To those who *feel* the power is given
This sign of mystery to scan,
And draw down from the stars of heaven
A lesson for the heart of man,
That it should cherish in all grief
Its own affections as relief."*

Even the most unworthy in this world have some one who cares for them; and if all human sympathy should fail, still our Heavenly Father never tires, and never ceases in his efforts to draw us towards good. He does so sometimes by affliction, sometimes by prosperity; but, alas! like poor Adolph, we refuse to listen to his call; we refuse even to help ourselves, and perversely act in the way least conducive to our happiness in this world or the next. "Ye will not come unto me that ye may have rest," may be said to almost all of us happiness-seeking yet most perverse mortals.

The old man's strength failed, but he prayed fervently that he might be the means of happiness to his beloved nephew. In spite of his exertions, when the legate arrived, his works were not finished. Determined, however, to make an effort to interest the powerful man in

* Sir Francis Doyle.

his behalf, he contrived, by means of a friend, that his designs should be shewed to him. Fortunately the legate was so much pleased with them, that he gave an order, not only for the Madonna and the Holy Family, but for several other things, to decorate a new church he was building at Florence.

The old man's desires were now fully accomplished; his mind once at rest, he was able to work with renewed vigour, and in a few months his labours were ended—he received more than the wished for 4000 ducats.

He had kept all this a secret from his nephew, and now he went with his treasure to the parents of Elise, and demanded her in marriage for his nephew, as the young man's independence was thus secured. They joyfully consented. The young people were married, and the happiness of all parties was complete.

Adolph was one of those who seem at first sight to thrive in prosperity, and who appear to require the stimulant of success in order to develop their energies. This is often the case with what are termed spoilt children, who, so long as all goes on right, and they meet with nothing to thwart their inclinations, act well and vir-

tuously. From the moment he obtained Elise, nothing could be more steady and industrious than Adolph. He was indefatigable in his studio, and, touched to the heart by the generous devotion of his uncle, he toiled assiduously, not only to reimburse all that the old man had expended, but to ensure for him a handsome independence for the rest of his life.

We may ask, why should such a character be ever afflicted, when prosperity thus fosters its good qualities? If we read the book of Job, the reason will be obvious.

The young people continued to live with their uncle, and during the first year of their marriage nothing could exceed the happiness of them all; and this was crowned by the birth of a child, which the affectionate old man adored, if possible, more than he had ever loved any human being.

Guillermin now only worked occasionally. His model was generally the young child of his nephew. The infant, with its lovely mother, formed a charming group for a Madonna and Child; and many are the altar-pieces, both in painting and carving, in which their beauty has been immortalized. Thus passed two happy

years; and the old man had quite given up any fears on his nephew's account.

About this time a young artist from Florence came to Avignon, whose genius soon procured him abundant employment. Adolph had hitherto been considered the best painter in Avignon, but now many preferred the pictures of the young Florentine—an opinion which Adolph himself felt was not without foundation. Not wishing, however, to shew that he felt any jealousy of his successful rival, he cultivated the acquaintance of the Florentine, and they became apparently inseparable friends. Often did they paint together in the same studio, and Elise and her lovely babe were frequently the subjects of the stranger's pencil.

Old Guillermin did not quite approve of this great intimacy, for there was something in young Valentino's countenance which seemed to belie his actions. However, not liking to instil any doubts into his nephew's apparently ingenuous heart, he said nothing to him, though, with great gentleness, he cautioned Elise not to encourage the frequent visits of her husband's friend. The young wife received this caution with evident embarrassment, and the old man began to

tremble, lest the handsome stranger had made too great an impression on her heart.

Soon afterwards, Adolph went to Toulouse to receive an order for the altar-piece of its fine cathedral, and during his absence, the old man was glad to find that Elise did not receive the visits of Valentino. Under the plea of illness, she shut herself up with her baby, and old Guillermin felt quite re-assured. But, as the old poet, Sir John Harington, quaintly says—

> "Against bad tongues, goodness cannot defend her;
> Those be most free from faults, they least will spare;
> But prate of them whom they have scantly known,
> Judging their humours to be like their own."

In the mean time, Adolph was receiving splendid orders for pictures at Toulouse. He met there the young Robert, whom he had formerly called his evil genius, and who, a disappointed suitor of Elise, had left Avignon shortly after Adolph's marriage. Robert met him with great cordiality, but there was a sinister expression on his countenance which almost made Adolph tremble.

"So, you are a happy husband, and father, too, and become quite a steady man! Happy in your wife, and in your wife's friend, too, I hear."

"My wife's friend! What do you mean?"

"Yes, your wife's friend. Do you think it is for your beaux yeux that Valentino visits your house so often? Have we not got her as a Madonna, painted by him, in our church of St. Stephen? and is not their love the talk of all Avignon?"

Adolph was thunderstruck. His jealousy thus excited, a thousand recollections darted into his mind to confirm his suspicions. There could be no doubt—and a sudden conviction that Elise was guilty seemed to stifle reason and depress every power. And yet Adolph had no opinion of Robert. Why, then, was his mind so suddenly poisoned against his wife and friend? Because passion blinded his better judgment, and his old perverseness of heart returned. Without waiting to finish the orders he had received, he started that very night for Avignon; and his feelings may be read in some fine lines of Massinger's:—

"What a bridge
Of glass I walk upon, over a river
Of certain ruin, mine own weighty fears
Cracking what should support me,
Ravish'd by doubts and wilful jealousy."

Yet many persons maintain that there can be no love without jealousy. Massinger was not of this opinion; for he says—

> " Will you then confirm
> That love and jealousy, though of different natures,
> Must of necessity be twins—the younger
> Created only to defeat the elder,
> And spoil him of his birthright? 'Tis not well."

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It was evening, and old Guillermin had embraced his darling child and its mother, and retired to rest. Elise had just placed her babe in its cradle, and was preparing to go to bed, when she was startled by a rustling of the vine-leaves at her window. On approaching it, she saw a man's head, and was about to alarm the house, when a well-known voice implored her to be silent. " Only listen to me for one moment, and I will never molest you again; but," continued Valentino, in a menacing air, as he bounded into the room, " if you alarm the house, be assured, your fair fame will be lost!"

Elise felt the whole danger of her situation. She had long been aware of his love; and hence her embarrassment when the old man mentioned

his fears; but, aware of her husband's jealous disposition, and entering fully into the motives which induced him to cultivate the intimacy of a rival artist, she had forborne to mention the painful subject, and only endeavoured to repress, in every possible way, the secret advances of Valentino.

She now earnestly implored him to begone.

"Only say that you do not detest me!" he exclaimed—"Only say that in time you may look favourably on me, and I will trouble you no more!"

At this moment, a noise was heard on the stairs—"Fly! it is my husband!" exclaimed Elise. Valentino hurried to the window, but before he could reach it, the door was forcibly broken open, and Adolph rushed into the room. "Where is he?—where is the traitor? I knew I should find him here!" he exclaimed, brandishing a dagger. So saying, he rushed upon the unfortunate Valentino, and in another moment the dagger had pierced his breast! "Perish, traitor!—you, too, faithless wife, shall die!" he said, rushing towards her. Poor Elise sunk senseless on the ground, where she lay unconscious of all that then passed.

Old Guillermin had been awakened by the noise, and running down stairs, he found his nephew bending over the dying artist, and listening to the faint words he tried to utter.

"She is innocent!" said Valentino; "with my dying breath I call God to witness that she is so. The fault was all my own; forgive me, my friend, and suspect not your spotless wife." These were his last words, uttered so earnestly as to convince Adolph of their truth. He eagerly ran to implore the forgiveness of Elise for his unjust suspicions.

Valentino died; the report of the murder was soon noised abroad, and the officers of justice seized their unresisting victim, and conveyed him, heavily ironed, to the dismal dungeons beneath the papal palace. Adolph was tried, and condemned to death.

The young artist was sentenced to be cut off in the flower of his youth—in the midst of all his lately attained, but long wished for bliss. The agonized wife, the heart-broken uncle, threw themselves at the feet of the judges in vain. There had been so many murders committed in Avignon, by persons of even the highest rank,

and so little was this crime regarded, that the government was determined to act with rigour, and it was finally resolved to make an example of the unfortunate Adolph. In vain his uncle urged that the crime was unpremeditated—that a sudden paroxysm of jealousy, under circumstances which indeed were enough to awaken it, had led to the fearful catastrophe. The government was inexorable, and the morning of the 15th September was fixed for Adolph's execution.

Old Guillermin was now completely heart-broken; after a last effort to touch the hearts of those in authority, he returned home, and shut himself up in his studio—that room where he had so often worked by the side of his dear nephew—that room in which he had so often sought for consolation, and never yet in vain; whatever wishes he had formed whilst engaged with his work had in time been fulfilled. He mechanically took up a crucifix which had occupied him for some time, and as he began, almost unconsciously, to use his chisel, the old feeling of hope, which was so connected with that employment, returned to his mind. At first it was vague, and merely the effect of pleasing association; but it

gradually assumed a more tangible shape, and it occurred to him that the "Penitents noirs" were in possession of a bull from the Pope, which gave them the power of asking on their festival the pardon of a criminal; but the poor sculptor was unacquainted with the confrérie; and how was he to ingratiate himself so as to interest them in his favour?

He now looked with rapture at the crucifixion, upon which he had already bestowed so much labour, and on it he built his hopes; but here another difficulty presented itself—the work was not finished, and the day of the festival was near at hand. Oh! what would he not have given for even one of the precious days he had lost in fruitless entreaty?

But this shadow of hope had no sooner dawned on the old man's mind than he set to work, and never, even in the brilliant days of youth, did he labour with greater assiduity, for now he toiled for his dear nephew's life, whose adoring wife and lovely child smiled encouragingly on his efforts. Old Guillermin worked day and night, and on the eve of the festival presented himself at the convent gate with his crucifix.

The gift was joyfully accepted, and the next day he had the happiness to embrace his pardoned nephew.

Those who have had the patience to read the above moralizing story, may well imagine with what interest we looked on the ivory crucifix, upon which the lives and happiness of so many beings had depended.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

The old Bridge at Avignon—Good effects of a Dream—Orange: its fine Roman Theatre, and Triumphal Arch—L'Isle—Vaucluse.

*Avignon, Hotel de l'Europe, October* 11.—A friend of mine said, when she heard we were coming here, that I should have much pleasure in seeing Avignon, because I had described it as the scene of poor Queen Joanna of Naples' trial, which took place here in the fourteenth century. I expected, however, much less enjoyment in seeing the actual place than I found in writing about it, and fancied the old town of my imagination would have proved far more beautiful than the real one. But I am agreeably disappointed.

After dinner, we hurried to the bridge, to enjoy the sunset from the island which divides the river. The view was very beautiful. The old

wall, the Tour de l'Horloge, the misshapen yet imposing mass which composed the palace of the popes, the tower of the cathedral, the crowning height, the curious telegraph, the magnificent river, the remains of the old bridge, with its little chapel, all contributed to the beauty of the landscape.

The old bridge is said to have owed its existence to a dream. A shepherd, named Bénézet, asserted to the Bishop and inhabitants of Avignon, that, while tending his flock on the opposite side where Villeneuve des Avignons now stands, he was directed in a dream to build a bridge across the river, to facilitate the approach of pilgrims to the city.

He succeeded in persuading them of the reality of his mission; and, in 1178, the bridge was begun. Its construction was favoured by Raymond, fifth Count of Toulouse. A convent to receive the pilgrims was built at the Avignon extremity of the bridge, and Benézét established in it a religious administration of Ponts et Chaussées, they were called "Pontifes," or "Frères du Pont," and obtained great privileges, but were afterwards suppressed. Bénézet, now a saint, was in 1184 buried in the little chapel on the bridge.

We are now come to the beaten track of English travellers, as is shewn by the much greater civility of the innkeepers, and their anxiety to please. On the other side of Montpellier they never appeared glad to see the arrival of an English family. The fact is, that English travellers usually give a great deal more trouble, particularly in places not much frequented by them, where arrangements are not yet made for the supply of hot water, and the numerous other luxuries which Englishmen require.

Here we are obliged to pay dearer for our superior accommodation, and very justly too. Instead of grumbling at the price we have to pay for English luxuries, we ought, indeed, to be very thankful to those foreign innkeepers who give us the enjoyment of them. In my suffering state, this excellent hotel, with its warm rooms, luxurious chairs, and numerous comforts, is quite, as the French say, "impayable."

Our apartment contains the first carpet we have trod on since we left Paris, and there are some old sofas and chairs which I fancy may have been used by the unfortunate Queen Joanna, or Petrarch's Laura—they look so grand and venerable.

Yesterday, we resolved, as it would save time, now so precious to us, to visit Orange, as by doing so we may see Vaucluse on Monday, sleep at L'Isle, and so proceed to Aix on Tuesday, without returning to Avignon. Our plans, however, were destined to be frustrated!

The wind was high and sharp, which made the drive disagreeable; it was long and tedious too, —Orange being twenty-eight kilometres, seventeen miles, from Avignon. The road, not very good, is flat and uninteresting; but the ruins are well worthy a visit. Orange was the ancient Aransion or Ansion, spoken of by Strabo, and became a Roman colony under Nero. At Roquemaure, not far from Orange, on the opposite side of the Rhone, Hannibal effected the passage of the river.

The first Count d'Orange was Girard d'Odlemard, who lived at the beginning of the eleventh century; a Princess Tiburga beautified the town in 1140, and in 1393, the principality passed into the house of Nassau. Prince Maurice fortified Orange, and probably built the castle, the ruins of which are on the height above the theatre. William III. of England, dying without children, the principality came to Fre-

derick William, King of Prussia, who, in 1713, by the treaty of Utrecht, ceded it to France.

We first went to the theatre, the façade of which is extraordinarily perfect. Perrot gives its dimensions, 107 feet high, and 316 long. There is a large square door in the centre, and nine arches on each side, formed by pilasters of the Doric order. The pilasters of the large entrance are higher, and have Corinthian capitals of white marble: these pilasters support an entablature, over which, for a considerable height, the wall is bare. It is supposed that a large portico went along this wall, supported by columns in front, and the traces of ruins seem to support this idea. Above, are twenty-one false arches with round openings, intended to give air to the corridors within; then comes a cornice, in which are large projecting stones, perforated with holes, and corresponding with similar projections in the cornice that terminates the height. These are supposed to have been destined for the poles which supported the velaria, or awnings, to protect the theatre from the sun and rain.

The architect took advantage of the slope of the hill to form the seats for the spectators, and by this means much labour was saved. The lines

of the lower seats are defined by some remains—the upper seats are quite destroyed; heaps of rubbish remain, full of large holes—passages, probably, when the ruins were crowded with modern dwellings: for, like the Amphitheatre at Nismes, they were once thickly inhabited; an abuse, however, which no longer exists; and, as the attention of government is now awakened, the building will sustain no further injury.

The stage was most solidly built of large blocks, and is tolerably preserved: it was decorated with columns of fine marble. Fragments of rosso antico, giallo antico, granite, &c., have been found in abundance, and are kept in an adjoining room, but the pieces are so small, as to shew that the work of destruction was effectually done.

At each side of the stage are two buildings, of a very massive construction; they contained large rooms, and the staircase of one is perfect: in some instances two steps are formed out of one stone. We partly ascended one, still full of rubbish, the masonry of which is very fine, and in my opinion would announce a better period of art than that usually given as the date of this building—the reign of Constantine. The quantity of ashes, and the blackened walls, shew

that the destruction of this interesting monument was effected by fire. The furious zeal of a Christian bishop, excited the people to commit this barbarous act.

On our way to the Triumphal Arch, we passed by one of the arches of the Hippodrome, which was of great extent. The Triumphal Arch has suffered much, and one of the side arches has been almost entirely restored: the preservation, therefore, of the rosaces in the ceiling of the principal arch is the more remarkable.

The height is said to be about sixty-five English feet: it consists of three arcades, of which the centre is much the largest; four Corinthian pillars on each façade, placed on projecting pedestals, support the entablature; the whole is richly ornamented, but has greatly suffered. On the front of the platform, above the great arch, on both sides, are spirited bas-reliefs, representing a battle—some of the combatants on horseback, some represent barbarians half naked, with large shields. The bas-reliefs above the smaller arches represent military and naval trophies, standards, shields, &c.; on the shields are some letters, supposed to be the names of the Gallic chiefs. The coil of ropes, masts, &c.,

among the naval attributes, are very well executed. Religious attributes are the subject of one relief. On the eastern side are figures of captives with their hands tied behind them.

Antiquarians have differed as to the date of this monument. Some attribute it to the period of Marcus Aurelius's victories, others to the victory of Marius over the Cimbri, which took place near Aix; but Perrot ascribes it to the time of Domitius Œnobarbus, who, after his victory, mounted on an elephant, made a triumphal march through Gaul, along the Via Domitia, (so called from him); and as the inhabitants of Orange were his allies, it seems not unlikely that they, as well as those of Cavaillon and Carpentras, erected triumphal arches on the occasion.

The drive home was less uncomfortable, as the wind was in our backs; but I believe I am indebted to this long expedition for the bad cold with which I have since suffered.

*L'Isle, Tuesday.* — At a very uncomfortable inn, but I am so ill that every place must appear wretched.

The first part of the drive is without interest; but from the height before we reached L'Isle, the

view of the Comptat, thickly studded with houses and villages, the Chateau of St. André above Villeneuve, and Avignon, with its conspicuous buildings, is very rich.

We first drove to the hotel with a promising title—that of "Petrarque et Laure;" which does, however, no credit to its patrons, so we returned tó (the "Poste") L'Hotel St. Martin, and found it better, though far from good. I intended to have gone on to Vaucluse; but felt too ill to proceed; so W—— went alone. He says—

"I started, in an old lumbering gig, for Vaucluse. The post-master himself drove me—not wishing, as he said, 'me fier à ces jeunes gens,' and fortunately for me he had these scruples, as I found him a very intelligent, obliging old fellow. Nothing could be more uninteresting than the drive, and therefore the romantic beauty, I may say grandeur, of Vaucluse is the more striking; but the country, though most destitute of beauty, is rich in other respects—mulberry trees and garance its chief productions.

"My guide asserts that the climate is getting too cold for olives, which now frequently fail. Garance, which produces a beautiful red dye, is the great crop: the root is the part made use of;

and must be three years old to be fit for use; it is grown in trenches, and earthed every year. When the garance is to be pulled, the labourers earn three and a half or four francs a-day—ordinary price, thirty-five sous. At Orgon there is a fine garance-mill, where the root is pulverized for sale: it is conducted by an Englishman. The pantaloons of the French army are all of this colour.

"I obtained from my worthy 'Maître de Poste' some information about the management of the silkworm. I find that an ounce of eggs, called here, 'grain,' will produce about a quintal, rather more than a hundred weight of cocoons, and these about ten pounds of silk. The worms produced by an ounce of 'grain' will consume from twenty-eight to thirty quintals, about a tun and a half of mulberry leaves. The hatching is effected by exposing the 'grain' to a moderate degree of heat; the poor do so, by placing them in their beds, and, to keep up the required heat, one of the family always remains in bed until the operation is completed.

"The caterpillars feed for about a month, with three intervals of three or four days, during which they lie in a dormant state. The finest cocoons are

kept for breed; the moth, which is large and heavy, flutters about, but does not fly. The women pair them, and the eggs are laid on pieces of cloth. The mulberry produces two crops of leaves: the young leaves in May are used for the silkworms, the second growth, now collecting, affords excellent food for cattle, particularly young lambs.

"Vaucluse, independent of association, is well worth seeing. Immediately before entering its valley, the country is poor, flat, and, in some places, uncultivated; then the scene suddenly changes, and becomes picturesque; wild rocky heights, broken into fantastic forms, and terminated by a bold and perpendicular mountain. Before reaching the village, we saw a pretty campagne, placed under a projecting rock, belonging to a gentleman of L'Isle.

"The village is a poor place: some mills—one for the manufacture of paper—are placed along the banks of the river, a rapid and clear stream, remarkable for having attained a considerable size within a few hundred yards of its source. The fishing is excellent, my host told me that an Englishman used to come every year to fish—I think he said for so many as ten years; he caught

more than any one, and the boy who attended him, learned his method so well, that he is now the best fisherman of the place: the Englishman has not been seen for some years.

"All traces of Petrarch have disappeared. A house is pointed out, which is said to have been built upon the site of the one he inhabited; it is placed between two others, so the entire scene is changed. A neglected pillar stands in the little 'place' before the inn—on it are the words, 'à Petrarque;' this once stood close to the edge of the fountain, where it was clearly out of place. Inglis attributes its removal to the suggestion of the Duchesse d'Angoulême: my host gave the merit to Lucien Buonaparte, and, to my surprise, quoted the following lines, as written by Lucien, under the influence of which the authorities removed the pillar:—

'Nymphe, sors de ta grotte profonde
Viens, renverser ce monument,
Laure gemit pour son amant,
Tu dois gemir pour ton onde.'

"As Petrarch survived Laura, we must conclude that it was his absence in Italy that Laura lamented, but without giving him the satisfaction of knowing that she did so. Opinion here seems

divided as to the identity of Laura; there were two individuals of that name, one of Salles, and the other of Baux; and now I recollect, the tomb of Laura which I visited at Avignon, is in the quarter of the town called Baux—something in favour of the Baux theory. I saw the Castle of Salles, on my way; not far distant from the road, and, according to my host, well worth a visit; it still belongs to the Salles family, and the present Marquess, who resides at Paris, is the proprietor. It is in its original state, and rather difficult of access, from the whim of the old steward. The Castle of Salles is said to have been the scene of some great atrocities in former times.

"When we reached the village, we put up at the little inn, and my post-master accompanied me to the fountain, determined himself to be my cicerone. The path is alongside of the river, and not practicable for a carriage; but it is only a ten minutes' walk. The scenery is very picturesque, the ruins of the old castle, perched on its almost inaccessible position, and the pointed rock, which shoots up like an obelisk, are the striking objects; but it is altogether very peculiar and interesting. The river is not the least curious

feature—it is a wide and rapid stream; near the road, some springs gush from the rock, of force sufficient to turn a mill.

"When near the fountain, the effect is curious; there is an ascent to reach it, and the river is lost both to sight and hearing altogether; the ascent is alongside of the rocky bed of a waterfall, now quite dry and covered with long, dark moss. The path leads to a perpendicular rock, or rather mountain, and immediately at its base lies the fountain, in a basin of perhaps fifty or sixty feet in circumference. It is now about half full; when low, the grotto may be entered to a considerable distance; and when full—that is, when the water reaches 'the fig-tree,' which grows out of the rock above—it flows over, and forms a fine cascade on the moss-covered bed I have spoken of.

"Just as we got back to the inn, heavy drops began to fall, with all the appearance of continued rain; but, after a lapse of a quarter of an hour, it cleared a little, so we started, and reached home without having had the wetting we expected."

I felt so ill and relaxed from the climate, that we had a long consultation as to the prudence of going on; the result was, a determination,

much to our regret, to give up the plan of passing the winter in Italy, and to go and seek for more bracing air at Paris. We therefore retraced our steps to Avignon, and were fortunate in finding the best rooms vacant—the Duchess Dowager of B—— had left them in the morning, and their quiet was to me a most material advantage.

## CHAPTER XXV.

Villeneuve les Avignons—Fine monument of Innocent VI. —Interesting picture of La Marquise de Gange—Her sad history—The tomb of Laura—The Papal palace.

*Avignon, Hotel de l' Europe, October* 16.—W—— walked this morning to Villeneuve des Avignons; a very blowing day made the limestone dust most annoying. His account is as follows :—

"I passed the fine tower which probably served to defend the old bridge. I can hardly think that its remaining arches are of the age attributed to them (1178); they look like modern work, and yet the old chapel of St. Bénézet seems to confirm their date.

"Villeneuve possesses a fine Gothic monument of Innocent VI. once in the famous Chartreuse, which fell a prey to the Revolution. Its extensive possessions were divided into twenty lots and sold; this monument, being in one of them, re-

mained for years neglected in a barn; but was at last brought to light, and is now placed in the little chapel of the hospital. It is a fine specimen of the ornamental style of the fourteenth century, —very graceful and elaborate.

"The figure of the Pope is represented reposing on the sarcophagus; three highly ornamented arches are on each side; on the pillars which support them are ornamented pedestals, with tabernacled canopies for statues, which are wanting; above the cornice are three niches containing figures; pinnacles of great richness and beauty adorn the summit, which is terminated by three of superior size, and in open work—that of the centre being the tallest.*

" In the refectoire of the Hospice is the picture of the last judgment, attributed to King Réné, which has greatly suffered. I did not see much merit about it; but the portrait of the unfor-

* On the side of the sarcophagus is this inscription:— "Hic jacet Innocentius Papa sixtus. Primus fundator hujus domus qui obiit anno millesimo trecetesimo sexagesimo secundo die vero duodecima mensis Septembris cuius anima in pace requiescat. Amen." And on the other side is an inscription, stating by whom and how the monument was removed and repaired in 1835.

tunate Marquise de Gange is very interesting. The face is extremely pretty—features small and delicate, fine hazel eyes, a countenance expressive of simplicity and good humour, not unlike in character many of the pretty peasants I have seen in and about Avignon. She is dressed in the order of St. Rose, and the costume is not becoming: a white band of linen encircles the face, the rest of the dress is a nun's habit of white cloth. She is represented holding up the front of her dress, in which is lying a bouquet of flowers. The copy of the original, very fairly executed, is at the other end of the room; why taken, I did not discover. This portrait has a sad interest attached to it. The Marquise de Gange, at the age of 13, was married to the Marquis de Castellane, and her beauty procured for her, at the Court of Louis XIV., the title of 'La Belle Provençale.' On the death of her first husband, she married the Marquis de Gange, and came to live with him at Avignon.

"The Marquis had two brothers, one of them an Abbé, who were captivated with the charms of their beautiful sister-in-law; but as she resisted all their solicitations, their love was turned to

bitter hate, and, rendered furious by disappointment, they resolved to destroy her.

"One day, taking advantage of their brother's absence, they entered her apartment with a cup of poison, a sword, and a pistol, and addressing her very politely said, 'Choisissez, Madame ; mais il faut mourir.' The unfortunate victim made choice of the cup, and when they retired, she contrived, by means of a hair, to bring up what she had swallowed. She then got out of the window, hoping by flight to escape from her destroyers; but in vain, they pursued her, and she fell beneath repeated blows from the dagger of one of the brothers. They were afterwards taken, tried, and convicted, and were broken upon the wheel.

"The castle St. André, once a stronghold of the Popes, is now in ruins. The great towers at the gateway are fine constructions; one of them is now used occasionally as a prison. I ascended this tower, which contains two rooms of great size. I was warned not to approach one of them—that on the first story; the floor is covered with straw, full of fleas, no doubt anxiously looking out for the first unfortunate prisoner who may arrive. The view from the top of the tower is

very commanding. I looked into the church at Villeneuve, but saw nothing remarkable."

W—— thus describes a walk, in Avignon, to visit Laura's tomb, and some other sights:

"Under the guidance of the plan of Avignon, which I had studied, I found my way through a number of narrow streets, to that where is the Tombeau de Laure.

"Avignon is an interesting old town to walk through; sometimes, in a dirty narrow street, a building of considerable size, and of good architecture, the remains of papal grandeur, surprises one. Laura was buried in the church of the convent of the Cordeliers, which was of great extent, and, like so many others, fell a prey to the Revolution of 1789. I think Laura's tomb was at that time destroyed.

"The ground upon which the convent stood has been purchased by a society formed at Avignon, for the education and support of sixty orphans. The children are clothed and instructed either in weaving velvets, or to become smiths, carpenters, or shoemakers; they are also taught to read, write, and cipher. A very commodious building has been just erected, but is not yet finished; it contains excellent halls, and a good dormitory,

where every boy has a little recess for his bed. Some monks superintend this very useful and creditable establishment.

"The spot pointed out as the position of Laura's tomb, is in the garden, where a pillar has been erected, surmounted with a cross, and surrounded by some young cypresses. On the pillar is the following inscription, in which the well-known lines of François I. are appropriately introduced:—

"'Quo clarius notescat locus
Tam indigenis quam peregrinis
Ubi requiescat
Laura illa Petrarca amor
Hunc cippum posuit
Carolus Hensall Anglicus
Per Aveniorem iter faciens
Anno Sal. MDCCCXXIII.
Nil amplius addere optimé monent
Nota hæc regii poetæ carmina.

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'"Oh, gentille ame étant tant estimeé,
Qui te pourra louer qu'en se taisant?
Car la parole est toujours réprimée,
Quand le sujet surmonte le disant.'

"On the cippus is an ornamental cross in stone, on the upper part of which is a garland, also in stone. It rests on a rough, circular ball, with a

scroll round it, on which are these words:—'Tunc parebit signum filii hominis. Alors paraîtra le signe du fils de l'homme.'

"From the Orphan Asylum, I went to the Military Asylum, a fine establishment, in the style of Les Invalides at Paris; the number of pensioners here is fixed to be at 600. I fancy it now contains more than the number. It seems very well conducted: the pensioners are fed and clothed, and have two francs a month; then they have the privilege of selling a spare loaf of bread, or a bottle of wine. The bed-rooms were clean; on a shelf over each bed is a pasteboard form for a cocked hat, and on it also was each man's goblet, containing his napkin, spoon and fork. At the foot of the bed is a press, where each pensioner keeps his clothes, &c.

"The park is divided into alleys, called after the various battles, and on the walls are inscribed the names of distinguished officers, the history of Napoleon, dates of battles, &c.; but these have suffered much from last year's inundation, and are to be renewed. This building was an old convent of great size. The 'lingerie' is established in the upper part of the dome of the church, now secularized, and is a curiosity for regu-

larity and order. Every week the linen is changed; each man brings his dirty linen to his number, and receives clean in exchange. The commandant is an invalided general; he lodges in a handsome hôtel near the hospital, and has 12,000 francs a year.

"To-day (16th), I again visited the ancient palace of the Popes, or rather that part of it which is now a barrack, and contains I think, 2500 men. The palace was a very large building, constructed at different epochs, but without any uniformity; strength and size appear to have been in view, and architectural beauty not thought of.

"The Salle de l'Inquisition, with the remains of a painting on the wall, representing a curtain with the fleur-de-lis, is shewn: there are openings in the ceiling by means of which secretaries, placed in different rooms, heard and took down the deposition of the accused, who was placed in the room, but saw no one. Through a trap-door, we looked down into the dismal prison beneath, where the prisoners were kept previous to examination; and next room to the "Salle de l'Inquisition" was that of "La Question," the walls incline inwards, and this construction was given—so said our guide—to prevent the cries of the

sufferers from being heard. It is now open to the top; in it are pointed out the place where there were hooks in the wall, with the furnace where the instruments of torture were heated, and outside is a stone trough used for boiling water.

"But I had not yet done with horrors: a place was shewn where stood the hall, in which a Pope's Legate, M. de la Lune, caused 500 citizens of Avignon to be destroyed. He had invited them to a grand entertainment, and whilst all was mirth and jollity, the legate and his followers, on the pretence of being called away for a few moments, withdrew; then, on a signal given, the hall was blown up with gunpowder, and all the unfortunate guests perished.

"Vengeance for the mutilation of his nephew was the cause of this dreadful deed. The young man had insulted some of the citizens' wives, was seized by the people in consequence, and cruelly punished. The legate vowed vengeance, and fearfully obtained it. He escaped, by a communication under the Rhone, to the Castle of St. André, at Villeneuve. The concierge pointed out the entrance to this passage, now walled up; but he asserted that the passage exists, and that

he had himself passed through it—an assertion, I own, I very much doubt.

"The consistory and chapel have been divided into three stories, to lodge the troops. The fine arches still exist in the upper stories, and in the consistory are some good frescoes, in excellent preservation, attributed to Giotto; these are very properly protected by an iron palisade. In a small room, called the Chapel of the Inquisition, are also some frescoes, but not in near so good a state of preservation. In this chapel the prisoners, before they were led to execution, were brought for confession."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Journey to Orange—Valence—Return to Paris.

After W——'s walk to Laura's tomb, we had still time enough for our short drive to Orange, where we had fixed to sleep. Although very ill, I enjoyed our séjour at Avignon. It is interesting in the recollections of its former greatness and interesting in its fallen fortunes. We left the town by the road leading to Vaucluse, and when we passed the turn and took the road to Orange, we then felt, with no small regret, that we had, indeed, turned our backs upon Italy, and all the enjoyment we had expected there.

At Orange, we went to the Triumphal Arch, to examine it more closely. On the western

arcade, which is almost entirely restored, is this inscription :—

" Munificentia
Com. 2 : Prov.
Valclusianœ,
Subsidiis,
M DCCC XXVIII."

We paid a long visit to the theatre, inspected its interesting stage, mounted on the top, and saw, from the marks on the side-walls, that the stage was formerly covered with a roof; but if so, of what use were the perforated projections of the façade? If to hold the poles of the velaria for covering the whole theatre, what was the use of the roofing for the stage? It might be that the façade was protected, but in that case, the idea of a fine portico to hide the naked part of the façade must be given up.

We afterwards ascended the height behind the theatre, where stood the Castle of the Princes of Orange. It must have been extensive and strong, but was totally destroyed by Louis XIV. Huge fragments of masonry are scattered about, and the base of one round tower is standing: the prospect from it is fine, and it is a good position for a general view of the theatre.

If we had the inn without musquitoes and fleas, we should have been very fairly off; but they made a combined attack, with such determination, that they actually droye me from my bed at half-past one, and I was forced, most unwillingly, to sit up the remainder of the night.

From Orange, we passed, by a high bridge, over the River d'Aigues: its large bed, and the mounds on each side, shew that it is sometimes a powerful tributary of the tremendous Rhone. Mornas, the first relais, is built against a rock of curious formation. It forms a high, jagged, and perpendicular wall, and is surmounted by the ruins of a castle.

It once belonged to the Baron des Adrets, who, in the religious war of Louis XIII., amused himself by forcing his catholic prisoners to jump off the rock on the pikes of his soldiers, who were drawn up below. Luckily, the height is so great that the poor wretches must have lost all consciousness before they reached the bottom.

At Palun, the next relais, we might have visited the ruins of the Chateau de Grignan; but a cross-road of four posts was too powerful a competitor for even the recollections of Madame

de Sévigné, and we continued our journey. Soon after leaving Palud, we entered the Department of Drôme, and from Douzères had a montée. Monte Limart is prettily situated on the Roubion, a considerable river, over which is a fine bridge, not far from its junction with the Rhone. Monte Limart (the ancient Acunum) is a good-sized town.

At Valence, we found much more comfortable accommodation than we expected; and, in fact, were very well off at l'Hôtel du Louvre, the 'Poste.' As we had started before seven, from Orange, we arrived early, and had our choice of the rooms.

The position of Valence, on the left bank of the Rhone, is very good. The river, though of much less breadth than at Avignon, is here a noble stream, and consists of but one channel. The Esplanade is a fine walk, commanding a view of the river and suspension bridge, and of St. Peray, famous for its wine, which much resembles Champagne. But the striking object of the view is the ruined Castle of Creshol, on an almost inaccessible rock on the opposite side of the river, above St. Peray.

We walked afterwards on the bridge, which is

a fine one, and resisted all the fury of last year's inundation. As we stood upon it, the sight of the mighty stream rushing on, and boiling below, was very grand. On our return, we fell in with a proprietaire of St. Peray, who was quite overwhelmed with wonder and delight at having, for the first time, spoken to an Englishman. He told us that a "piece," of the best quality, of St. Peray—containing about twenty dozen—would cost only one hundred francs, under ten sous the bottle—and yet a merchant to whom I spoke charges three francs a bottle; "pour le faire champagniser" is the great expense, as a number of bottles are lost. The fabrication of champagne is here carried on to a considerable extent.

We afterwards visited the cathedral, a very ancient building, of Norman architecture, which contains a monument of Pius VI., who died here in 1799.

The body of the Pope was sent to Rome, but, on a "reclamation," made by Valence, part of his remains were returned to the place where he died.

The monument consists of a bust, by Canova, of excellent workmanship, placed on a pedestal,

on the sides of which are some bas-reliefs, and in front the following inscription :—

" Sancta Pii Sexti redeunt.
Præcordia Gallis.
Roma tenet corpus.
Nomen ubique sonat.
Valentiæ obiit 29 Aug. an. 1799."

We remained at Valence on Sunday, and on the following day proceeded to Lyons; but I will not continue the description of a route so well known. We had a successful journey to Paris, and passed many months there so agreeably as to compensate, in some measure, for the expected pleasures of a winter in Italy.

THE END.

T. C. Savill, Printer, St. Martin's Lane.

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